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A STRANGE STORY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MY NOVEL," "RIENZI," &c.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE house I occupied at L— was a quaint, old-fashioned building—a corner house—one side, in which was the front entrance, looked upon a street which, as there were no shops in it, and it was no direct thoroughfare to the busy centres of the town, was always quiet, and at some hours of the day almost deserted. The other side of the house fronted a lane; opposite to it was the long and high wall of the garden to a Young Ladies' Boarding-School. My stables adjoined the house, abutting on a row of smaller buildings, with little gardens before them, chiefly occupied by mercantile clerks and retired tradesmen. By the lane there was short and ready access both to the high turnpike road and to some pleasant walks through green meadows and along the banks of a river.

This house I had inhabited since my arrival at L—, and it had to me so many attractions, in a situation sufficiently central to be convenient for patients, and yet free from noise, and favourable to ready outlet into the country for such foot or horse exercise as my professional avocations would allow me to carve for myself out of what the Latin poet calls the "solid mass of the day," that I had refused to change it for one better suited to my increased income; but it was not a house which Mrs. Ashleigh would have liked for Lilian. The main objection to it, in the eyes of the 'genteel' was, that it had formerly belonged to a member of the healing profession, who united the shop of an apothecary to the diploma of a surgeon; but that shop had given the house a special attraction to me; for it had been built out on the side of the house which fronted the lane, occupying the greater portion of a small gravel court, fenced from the road by a low iron palisade, and separated from the body of the house itself by a short and narrow corridor that communicated with the entrance-hall. This shop I turned into a rude study for scientific experiments, in which I generally spent some early hours of the morning, before my visiting patients began to arrive. I enjoyed the stillness of its separation from the rest of the house; I enjoyed the glimpse of the great chesnut-trees which overtopped the

wall of the school garden; I enjoyed the ease with which, by opening the glazed sash-door, I could get out, if disposed for a short walk, into the pleasant fields; and so completely had I made this sanctuary my own, that not only my man-servant knew that I was never to be disturbed when in it, except by the summons of a patient, but even the housemaid was forbidden to enter it with broom or duster, except upon special invitation. The last thing at night, before retiring to rest, it was the man-servant's business to see that the sash-window was closed and the gate to the iron palisade locked, but during the daytime I so often went out of the house by that private way that the gate was then very seldom locked, nor the sash-door bolted from within. In the town of L— there was very little apprehension of house-robberies—especially in the daylight—and certainly in this room, cut off from the main building, there was nothing to attract a vulgar cupidity. A few of the apothecary's shelves and cases still remained on the walls, with, here and there, a bottle of some chemical preparation for experiment. Two or three wormeaten, wooden chairs; two or three shabby old tables; an old walnut-tree bureau, without a lock, into which odds and ends were confusedly thrust, and sundry ugly-looking inventions of mechanical science, were, assuredly, not the articles which a timid proprietor would guard with jealous care from the chances of robbery. It will be seen later why I have been thus prolix in description. The morning after I had met the young stranger, by whom I had been so favourably impressed, I was up, as usual, a little before the sun, and long before any of my servants were astir. I went first into the room I have mentioned, and which I shall henceforth designate as my study, opened the window, unlocked the gate, and sauntered for some minutes up and down the silent lane skirting the opposite wall, and overhung by the chesnut-trees rich in the garniture of a glorious summer; then, refreshed for work, I re-entered my study and was soon absorbed in the examination of that now well-known machine, which was then, to me at least, a novelty; invented, if I remember right, by Monsieur Dubois-Reymond, so distinguished by his researches into the mysteries of organic electricity. It is a wooden cylinder fixed against the edge of a table; on the table two vessels filled with salt and water are so placed that, as you close

your hands on the cylinder, the forefinger of each hand can drop into the water; each of the vessels has a metallic plate, and communicates by wires with a galvanometer with its needle. Now the theory is, that if you clutch the cylinder firmly with the right hand, leaving the left perfectly passive, the needle in the galvanometer will move from west to south; if, in like manner, you exert the left arm, leaving the right arm passive, the needle will deflect from west to north. Hence, it is argued that the electric current is induced through the agency of the nervous system, and that, as human Will produces the muscular contraction requisite, so is it human Will that causes the deflection of the needle. I imagined that if this theory were substantiated by experiment, the discovery might lead to some sublime and un conjectured secrets of science. For human Will, thus actively effective on the electric current, and all matter, animate or inanimate, having more or less of electricity, a vast field became opened to conjecture. By what series of patient experimental deduction might not science arrive at the solution of problems which the Newtonian law of gravitation does not suffice to solve; and—But I must not suffer myself to be led away into the vague world of guess, by the vague reminiscences of a knowledge long since wholly neglected, or half-forgotten.

I was dissatisfied with my experiment. The needle stirred, indeed, but erratically, and not in directions which, according to the theory, should correspond to my movement. I was about to dismiss the trial with some uncharitable contempt of the French philosopher's dogmas, when I heard a loud ring at my street door. While I paused to conjecture whether my servant was yet up to attend to the door, and which of my patients was the most likely to summon me at so unseasonable an hour, a shadow darkened my window. I looked up, and to my astonishment beheld the brilliant face of Mr. Margrave. The sash to the door was already partially opened; he raised it higher, and walked into the room. "Was it you who rang at the street door, and at this hour?" said I.

"Yes; and observing, after I had rung, that all the shutters were still closed, I felt ashamed of my own rash action, and made off rather than brave the reproachful face of some injured housemaid, robbed of her morning dreams. I turned down that pretty lane—lured by the green of the chesnut-trees—caught sight of you through the window, took courage, and here I am! You forgive me?" While thus speaking, he continued to move along the littered floor of the dingy room, with the undulating restlessness of some wild animal in the confines of its den, and he now went on, in short fragmentary sentences, very slightly linked together, but smoothed, as it were, into harmony by a voice musical and fresh as a skylark's warble. "Morning dreams, indeed! dreams that waste the life of such a morning. Rosy magnificence of a summer dawn! Do you not pity the fool who prefers to lie abed, and to dream rather than to live? What! and you, strong man,

with those noble limbs, in this den! Do you not long for a rush through the green of the fields, a bath in the blue of the river?"

Here he came to a pause, standing, still in the grey light of the growing day, with eyes whose joyous lustre forestalled the sun's, and lips which seemed to laugh even in repose.

But presently those eyes, as quick as they were bright, glanced over the walls, the floor, the shelves, the phials, the mechanical inventions, and then rested full on my cylinder fixed to the table. He approached, examined it curiously, asked what it was? I explained. To gratify him, I sat down and renewed my experiment, with equally ill success. The needle, which should have moved from west to south, describing an angle of from 30 deg. to 40 or even 50 deg., only made a few troubled undecided oscillations.

"Tut!" cried the young man, "I see what it is; you have a wound in your right hand."

That was true. I had burnt my hand a few days before in a chemical experiment, and the sore had not healed.

"Well," said I, "and what does that matter?"

"Everything; the least scratch in the skin of the hand produces chemical actions on the electric current, independently of your will. Let me try."

He took my place, and in a moment the needle in the galvanometer responded to his grasp on the cylinder, exactly as the French philosopher had stated to be the due result of the experiment.

I was startled.

"But how came you, Mr. Margrave, to be so well acquainted with a scientific process little known, and but recently discovered?"

"I well acquainted! not so. But I am fond of all experiments that relate to animal life. Electricity especially, is full of interest."

On that I drew him out (as I thought), and he talked volubly. I was amazed to find this young man, in whose brain I had conceived thought kept one careless holiday, was evidently familiar with the physical sciences, and especially with chemistry, which was my own study by predilection. But never had I met with a student in whom a knowledge so extensive was mixed up with notions so obsolete or so crotchety. In one sentence he showed that he had mastered some late discovery by Faraday or Liebig; in the next sentence he was talking the wild fallacies of Cardan or Van Helmont. I burst out laughing at some paradox about sympathetic powders, which he enounced as if it were a recognised truth.

"Pray tell me," said I, "who was your master in physics, for a cleverer pupil never had a more crackbrained teacher."

"No," he answered, with his merry laugh, "it is not the teacher's fault. I am a mere parrot; just cry out a few scraps of learning picked up here and there. But, however, I am fond of all researches into Nature; all guesses at her riddles. To tell you the truth, one reason why I have taken to you so heartily is not only that your published work caught my fancy in the dip which I took into its contents (pardon me if

I say dip, I never do more than dip into any book), but also because young * * * * tells me that which all whom I have met in this town confirm; viz. that you are one of those few practical chemists who are at once exceedingly cautious and exceedingly bold—willing to try every new experiment, but submitting experiment to rigid tests. Well, I have an experiment running wild in this giddy head of mine, and I want you, some day when at leisure, to catch it, fix it as you have fixed that cylinder: make something of it. I am sure you can."

"What is it?"

"Something akin to the theories in your work. You would replenish or preserve to each special constitution the special substance that may fail to the equilibrium of its health. But you own that in a large proportion of cases the best cure of disease is less to deal with the disease itself than to support and stimulate the whole system, so as to enable Nature to cure the disease and restore the impaired equilibrium by her own agencies. Thus, if you find that in certain cases of nervous debility a substance like nitric acid is efficacious, it is because the nitric acid has a virtue in locking up, as it were, the nervous energy,—that is, preventing all undue waste. Again, in some cases of what is commonly called feverish cold, stimulants like ammonia assist Nature itself to get rid of the disorder that oppresses its normal action; and, on the same principle, I apprehend, it is contended that a large average of human lives is saved in those hospitals which have adopted the supporting system of ample nourishment and alcoholic stimulants."

"Your medical learning surprises me," said I, smiling, "and without pausing to notice where it deals somewhat superficially with disputable points in general, and my own theory in particular, I ask you for the deduction you draw from your premises."

"It is simply this: that to all animate bodies, however various, there must be one principle in common—the vital principle itself. What if there be one certain means of recruiting that principle? and what if that secret can be discovered?"

"Pshaw! The old illusion of the mediæval empirics."

"Not so. But the mediæval empirics were great discoverers. You sneer at Van Helmont, who sought, in water, the principle of all things; but Van Helmont discovered in his search those invisible bodies called gases. Now the principle of life must be certainly ascribed to a gas.* And whatever is a gas, chemistry should not despair of producing! But I can argue no longer now—never can argue long at a stretch—we are wasting the morning; and, joy! the sun is up! See! Out! come out! out! and greet the great Life-giver face to face."

* "According to the views we have mentioned, we must ascribe life to a gas, that is, to an æriform body."—Liebig, *Organic Chemistry*, Playfair's translation, p. 363.

I could not resist the young man's invitation. In a few minutes we were in the quiet lane under the glinting chesnut-trees. Margrave was chanting, low, a wild tune—words in a strange language.

"What words are those? no European language, I think; for I know a little of most of the languages which are spoken in our quarter of the globe, at least by its more civilised races."

"Civilised races! What is civilisation? Those words were uttered by men who founded empires when Europe itself was not civilised! Hush, is it not a grand old air?" and lifting his eyes towards the sun, he gave vent to a voice clear and deep as a mighty bell! The air was grand—the words had a sonorous swell that suited it, and they seemed to me jubilant and yet solemn. He stopped abruptly, as a path from the lane had led us into the fields, already half-bathed in sunlight—dews glittering on the hedgerows.

"Your song," said I, "would go well with the clash of cymbals or the peal of the organ. I am no judge of melody, but this strikes me as that of a religious hymn."

"I compliment you on the guess. It is a Persian fire-worshipper's hymn to the sun. The dialect is very different from modern Persian. Cyrus the Great might have chanted it on his march upon Babylon."

"And where did you learn it?"

"In Persia itself."

"You have travelled much—learned much—and are so young and so fresh. Is it an impertinent question, if I ask whether your parents are yet living, or are you wholly lord of yourself?"

"Thank you for the question—pray make my answer known in the town. Parents I have not—never had."

"Never had parents?"

"Well, I ought rather to say that no parents ever owned me. I am a natural son—a vagabond—a nobody. When I came of age I received an anonymous letter, informing me that a sum—I need not say what—but more than enough for all I need, was lodged at an English banker's in my name; that my mother had died in my infancy; that my father was also dead—but recently; that as I was a child of love, and he was unwilling that the secret of my birth should ever be traced, he had provided for me, not by will, but in his life, by a sum consigned to the trust of the friend who now wrote to me; I need give myself no trouble to learn more; faith, I never did. I am young, healthy, rich—yes, rich! Now you know all, and you had better tell it, that I may win no man's courtesy and no maiden's love upon false pretences. I have not even a right, you see, to the name I bear. Hist! let me catch that squirrel."

With what a panther-like bound he sprang! The squirrel eluded his grasp, and was up the oak-tree; in a moment he was up the oak-tree too. In amazement I saw him rising from bough to bough;—saw his bright eyes and glittering teeth through the green leaves; presently I heard the

sharp piteous cry of the squirrel—echoed by the youth's merry laugh—and down, through that maze of green, Margrave came, dropping on the grass and bounding up, as Mercury might have bounded with his wings at his heels.

"I have caught him—what pretty brown eyes!"

Suddenly the gay expression of his face changed to that of a savage; the squirrel had wrenched itself half-loose, and bitten him. The poor brute! In an instant its neck was wrung—its body dashed on the ground; and that fair young creature, every feature quivering with rage, was stamping his foot on his victim again and again! It was horrible. I caught him by the arm indignantly. He turned round on me like a wild beast disturbed from its prey. His teeth set, his hand lifted, his eyes like balls of fire.

"Shame!" said I, calmly; "shame on you!"

He continued to gaze on me a moment or so; his eye glaring—his breath panting—and then, as if mastering himself with an involuntary effort, his arm dropped to his side, and he said, quite humbly, "I beg your pardon; indeed I do. I was beside myself for a moment; I cannot bear pain;" and he looked in deep compassion for himself at his wounded hand. "Venomous brute!" And he stamped again on the body of the squirrel, already crushed out of shape.

I moved away in disgust, and walked on.

But presently I felt my arm softly drawn aside, and a voice, dulcet as the coo of a dove, stole its way into my ears. There was no resisting the charm with which this extraordinary mortal could fascinate even the hard and the cold; nor them, perhaps, the least. For as you see in extreme old age, when the heart seems to have shrunk into itself, and to leave but meagre and nipped affections for the nearest relations if grown up, the indurated egotism softens at once towards a playful child; or as you see in middle life, some misanthrope, whose nature has been soured by wrong and sorrow, shrink from his own species, yet make friends with inferior races and respond to the caress of a dog,—so, for the worldling or the cynic, there was an attraction in the freshness of this joyous favourite of Nature;—an attraction like that of a beautiful child, spoilt and wayward, or of a graceful animal, half docile, half fierce.

"But," said I, with a smile, as I felt all displeasure gone, "such indulgence of passion for such a trifle is surely unworthy a student of philosophy!"

"Trifle," he said, dolorously. "But I tell you it is pain; pain is no trifle. I suffer. Look!"

I looked at the hand, which I took in mine. The bite no doubt had been sharp; but the hand that lay in my own was that which the Greek sculptor gives to a gladiator; not large (the extremities are never large in persons whose strength comes from the just proportion of all the members, rather than the factitious and partial force which continued muscular exertion will give to one part of the frame, to the

comparative weakening of the rest), but with the firm-knit joints, the solid fingers, the finished nails, the massive palm, the supple polished skin in which we recognise what Nature designs the human hand to be—the skilled, swift, mighty doer of all those marvels which win Nature herself from the wilderness.

"It is strange," said I, thoughtfully; "but your susceptibility to suffering confirms my opinion, which is different from the popular belief, viz. that pain is most acutely felt by those in whom the animal organisation being perfect, and the sense of vitality exquisitely keen, every injury or lesion finds the whole system rise, as it were, to repel the mischief, and communicate the consciousness of it to all those nerves which are the sentinels to the garrison of life. Yet my theory is scarcely borne out by general fact. The Indian savages must have a health as perfect as yours; a nervous system as fine. Witness their marvellous accuracy of ear, of eye, of scent, probably also of touch, yet they are indifferent to physical pain; or must I mortify your pride by saying that they have some moral quality defective in you which enables them to rise superior to it?"

"The Indian savages," said Margrave, sullenly, "have not a health as perfect as mine, and in what you call vitality—the blissful consciousness of life—they are as sticks and stones compared to me."

"How do you know?"

"Because I have lived with them. It is a fallacy to suppose that the savage has a health superior to that of the civilised man,—if the civilised man be but temperate;—and even if not, he has the stamina that can resist for years what would destroy the savage in a month. As to their fine perceptions of sense, such do not come from exquisite equilibrium of system, but are hereditary attributes transmitted from race to race, and strengthened by training from infancy. But is a pointer stronger and healthier than a mastiff, because the pointer through long descent and early teaching creeps stealthily to his game and stands to it motionless? I will talk of this later; now I suffer! Pain, pain! Has life any ill but pain?"

It so happened that I had about me some roots of the white lily, which I meant, before returning home, to leave with a patient suffering from one of those acute local inflammations, in which that simple remedy often affords great relief. I cut up one of these roots, and bound the cooling leaves to the wounded hand with my handkerchief.

"There," said I. "Fortunately, if you feel pain more sensibly than others, you will recover from it more quickly."

And in a few minutes my companion felt perfectly relieved, and poured out his gratitude with an extravagance of expression and a beaming delight of countenance which positively touched me.

"I almost feel," said I, "as I do when I have stilled an infant's wailing, and restored it smiling to its mother's breast."

"You have done so. I am an infant, and Nature is my mother. Oh, to be restored to the full joy of life, the scent of wild flowers, the song of birds, and this air—summer air—summer air!"

I know not why it was, but at that moment, looking at him and hearing him, I rejoiced that Lillian was not at L—.

"But I came out to bathe. Can we not bathe in that stream?"

"No. You would derange the bandage round your head; and for all bodily ills, from the least to the gravest, there is nothing like leaving Nature at rest the moment we have hit on the means which assist her own efforts at cure."

"I obey, then, but I so love the water."

"You swim, of course?"

"Ask the fish if it swim. Ask the fish if it can escape me! I delight to dive down—down; to plunge after the startled trout, as an otter does; and then to get amongst those cool, fragrant reeds and bullrushes, or that forest of emerald weed which one sometimes finds waving under clear rivers. Man! man! Could you live but an hour of my life you would know how horrible a thing it is to die!"

"Yet the dying do not think so; they pass away calm and smiling, as you will one day."

"I—I! die one day—die!" and he sank on the grass, and buried his face amongst the herbage, sobbing aloud.

Before I could get through half a dozen words, meant to soothe, he had once more bounded up, dashed the tears from his eyes, and was again singing some wild, barbaric chant. I did not disturb him; in fact, I soon grew absorbed in my own meditations on the singular nature, so wayward, so impulsive, which had forced intimacy on a man grave and practical as myself.

I was puzzled how to reconcile so passionate a childishness, so undisciplined a want of self-control, with an experience of mankind so extended by travel, with an education, desultory and irregular indeed, but which must have been at some time or other familiarised to severe reasonings and laborious studies. There seemed to be wanting in him that mysterious something which is needed to keep our faculties, however severally brilliant, harmoniously linked together—as the string by which a child mechanically binds the wild flowers it gathers; shaping them at choice into the garland or the chain.

AT HOME IN RUSSIA.

IN A PEASANT'S HUT.

TEN at night found us within a station of Pereslaf. After getting our conveyance under cover, and our light luggage removed to the house or den, I had time to visit an adjoining peasant's hut.

Here was a whole family spinning and weaving flax. The family manufactory included every process, from the scutching to the linen weaving, all carried on within the space of a room twenty feet square. In a corner stood a mild, elderly

father scutching the straw from the flax; the mother sat near him, helped by a son, combing out the tow with hand brushes; every now and then throwing small twisted rolls of the tow into a bunker, and plaiting up the long flax ready for sale or spinning. Three rather good-looking girls were spinning and twirling the thread, several young ones were winding and unwinding the yarn, and one girl was the weaver at her loom plying the busy shuttle. The whole machinery employed in this primitive workshop and family manufactory—hear it, ye Baxters of Dundee, and Marshalls of Leeds—loom included, would not cost two sovereigns. My companion and fellow-traveller, a young Russian, very soon was on good terms with the young folks, and as I sat down by the dame, the old man joined us, and we talked of the late storm and its consequences, of the flax work, and of how they sold what they made, to pay the baron. They were communicative on the prices they got for the different qualities, told me how they worked at this all winter, and on the land all summer; how the baron was a good man, but spent in Moscow and Petersburg his time and money, leaving his poor slaves to the tender mercies of a German steward, who skinned them unmercifully. One of their boys, they said, had gone, or rather had been sent, to the Crimea as a soldier, and they had never heard of him since; another son was at Moscow in a woollen fabric, and had to pay fifty roubles a year, "obrok," to the baron. The two eldest girls had been ordered to marry after Easter, and to marry men they did not like. One of the men was a drunken worthless fellow, but ah, dear Heaven, had not their father, the emperor, God bless him! decreed their emancipation! And were they not soon to do what they liked, and be freed from the "obrok"! Their notions of liberty or political rights amounted to this, and no more.

Having sent my companion for tea and sugar, I asked the girls to prepare the urn, and further ingratiated myself by buying a piece of the linen they had made and bleached on the grass the previous summer. While the tea was being handed about an old woman came in: the "swacha," or ambassadress, from one of the intended bridegrooms. All marriages among the common people in Russia are negotiated by such go-betweens, who arrange preliminaries, extol the qualities of their clients, examine and decide on the trousseau of the bride, and act as head negotiators in the whole affair. When the father of the bride can afford it, money is demanded, and a written list of the "predania," or articles of the trousseau, is given in. The articles accordingly supplied are scrutinised, and accepted, rejected, or exchanged, according to the fiat of the old go-between. There is no courtship or personal affection before these marriages. The woman generally submits, as a matter of course, and becomes the slave of any brute appointed by the baron or steward, or by her father when no master interferes.

I know a family of free Russians, in which the father was of the rank of "chinovnik."

He had four daughters, all accomplished, the eldest decidedly plain, the others good-looking. A suitor appeared for the hand of the youngest and prettiest, in the person of a young government official. His go-between, or swacha, required to know how much money the father would give, and what the "predania." "I give nothing," said the old man. "The elder sisters must be married first, and it is robbing them to give first to the youngest. If the young man will take the eldest, I will give four thousand roubles; if the second, fifteen hundred; if the third, a 'predani' without money; but if he must have the youngest, nothing." As the young man wanted to buy or bribe his way into a higher station of life, he offered to take the eldest of these girls for six thousand roubles. This would have wronged the other daughters, and the offer was refused. The youngest, who had set her heart on the fellow, pined; the others offered to give up their claims to make her happy, but the father was inexorable. The poor thing was dead of consumption eighteen months afterwards, and the bargaining swain is now married to the eldest, richest, and least handsome. This happened in the capital, among what we called the "French-polished" Russians. But I must return to my poor peasants of no polish.

The swacha finding the field occupied by strange guests, confined herself on this occasion to an enumeration of the many excellences of the appointed husband, among which I remember one which sounded curious—it was, that though fond of brandy, he knew how to get it for nothing. Another was, that his father would not live long, and so, he being the eldest son, his wife would quickly become mistress of the whole family, and own the hut, pig, cow, horse, and other appurtenances of headship. When a woman marries the eldest son of a house, she is taken home to the paternal roof, and, on the death of the father, becomes mistress, to the exclusion of the mother-in-law, whose reign ceases at once.

As it was now late, the good people of this hut offered me a mattress in another room, and I passed the night luxuriously in clean linen, and with my clothes off, for the first and only time during a long Russian journey. Where the night was spent by my young Russian fellow-traveller I cannot tell. In the morning, when we were about to start, he had vanished with his traps, no one knew whither. After waiting at the station some time, I went back to inquire at my host's. One of the daughters met me at the door with sparkling eyes, as pretty a country beauty as I had seen anywhere in Russia. To my question she answered, "I will tell you; you are a good fellow. He cannot leave me yet, and will remain here a day or two. But don't say to anybody where he is. God give you a safe journey. Good-by." Wherewith she vanished. Already my fellow-travellers were grumbling at the long delay, so I had little difficulty in persuading them to travel on without him.

I may as well tell—since I know it—the

sequel to this little history. Nine months afterwards, I was stepping out of a railway carriage at Moscow, when I met my old companion of the hut; he seized my portmanteau with one hand, and with the other he dragged me to the gate, tumbled me with himself into a prelotka (a small open carriage), and directed the driver where to go. "You are going to my house," he said, "to meet an old acquaintance, and to be our guest while you remain in Moscow. Don't say no; it *shall* be so." On arriving at his house, a small one, but very respectable, I was agreeably surprised to meet the beauty of the hut, who came forward as his wife, looking as happy as man could desire. She had just finished a music lesson, was dressed very neatly, and she did the honours of the house quite creditably while I stayed.

"You remember telling me on that awful journey in March last," said the young Russian, when we sat up together, "how they married for love in England, and not for money; how women were not there slaves to men, and so forth. Well, I saw this girl, that very night, about to be sacrificed to a brute. I thought her good and pure, and you know she is beautiful. So I began that night to love her, told her so, and told her father so. I could not tear myself away for three days, and at the end of that time I determined I would have her, let it cost me what it might. So when I got to Moscow I called on her master, the baron; offered to buy her; and begged him not to allow her to be married to the bad man whom the steward had appointed. But," he continued, taking me by both hands, "you had been before me there. He told me that he had seen an Englishman who so represented the case, that he had given orders for the stopping of that marriage."

"Yes," I said, "I did see him, and found him a kind-hearted gentleman, quite unaware of some of his steward's pranks. He granted my request at once, and in my presence sent a letter off to stop the marriage."

"But," he said, "that is not all. He refused to sell her, said that he knew the family well, that the old man had charge of him while a boy, and once protected his life at some risk. He asked me what I was, and what interest I had in the girl? I replied, that I wanted to marry her. 'Then,' said he, 'the whole family shall have its freedom as soon as we can make out the necessary papers.' That is all done long ago. The rascally steward is discharged, and I am to fill his place."

THE RULE OF THE ROAD.

Again I turn to the snowy winter journey of which a part has been already described. The track on the fourth day was worse than any we had yet encountered, being more cut up with traffic. But we had good cattle, and one man less to carry, so, although we were upset more than once, we did not make less than our usual progress. Once, the kibitka turned over in a deep valley of snow, and the passengers were tossed together into a confused and

struggling mass. My breath was nearly choked out of me by the weight of a fat Russian baron whose thumb I was obliged to bite as he was digging his hands into my face, before he could be induced to tumble off. After scrambling, as usual, out at the top door, and to the track again, we found the whole wreck beyond remedy by our unassisted powers. Fortunately, however, a long line of sledges with goods from Rastov fair, being just in front of us, the poor peasants who were attached as drivers and guards, although they had plenty of troublesome work on their own hands, came back, and by main force lifted us out of the hole. It was some time before we were so far righted as to be able to go on, and then when we were making up lost time and overtook our friends with their sledges, numbering probably a hundred in a long line on the one solitary track, it became necessary to pass them if we would not be kept at a snail's pace for many hours. But the passing was not easy. The whole line must draw close to one side, and in some cases into the soft snow, and this the men for a long time refused to do. It was a difficult job, involving risks to some, and the road was theirs as well as ours. The Russian baron, who was one of us, at length lost all temper, and began to swear as only a Russian can. Being cold and hungry, exhausted and much shaken, he was anxious to get to some shelter, especially as night was now closing. Oaths having no effect, he lost the last glimmer of polish and came out the born Tartar that he was. Dragging the cudgel from my hand, he began belabouring with all his might the men and horses, dealing blows right and left, and compelling the men to draw up to one side as fast as we came up. For an hour this lasted, before we had passed all the sledges.

"There, you canaille!" he cried as he struck. "Take that! Give the road, you lazy vermin! Make room, you pigs! I am a baron, don't you see? A friend of the governor's! Sons of dogs! Defilement of the earth! Your mothers are beasts!" and so forth.

This was his gentlest style, while the blows fell in a shower. Forty or fifty men submitted to all this, grumbled, but cowed; they took the blows and insults of this one man as dogs take their masters' kicks; they were serfs, he was a baron. After he had recovered his seat and his breath, and had wiped the perspiration from his head, he turned to me, and asked, with an air of national pride,

"What do you say to that, me lord?"

"I say, that had you struck the poorest of my countrymen in that manner, they would either have boxed you into a jelly, or they would have tied you to a sledge until they reached the first town, and then given you up to a magistrate for an assault."

"Oh, as to that, I should soon get away from a magistrate. A little money would soon do that."

"Indeed! I can tell you that your whole estate, with a dozen like it, would not buy one of our magistrates."

This assertion only caused an incredulous laugh, and a remark from the baron that he could buy any country magistrate in Russia for fifty kopecks (eighteenpence).

FIVE IN A KIBITKA.

The baron referred to was a tall, stout man, well acquainted with the French and German languages as well as the Russ, and apparently, also, with the literature of England. He had read in French and Russian, translations of the works of the chief English novelists and poets of the present century. He spoke with enthusiasm of the English government and people; and he recited Russian compositions, which, in the time of Nicholas and at St. Petersburg, would have ensured him a free passage to Siberia. He told me he had just manumitted a great portion of his serfs, and was on his way to the two capitals to sell his estate and leave the country; or, failing in that, to lot his land, and bring it into proper cultivation. The great curse of the country, he thought, were the priests, a lazy, ignorant pack, immoral, drunken, and filthy in the interior, polished and crafty in the capitals. The emancipation of the serfs was nothing without the abolition of the priestly influence. The state finances, he said, were in a terrible low state. Why did not the emperor play Henry the Eighth, seize upon the numerous and enormously wealthy monasteries and churches, and melt down the gold and silver lying useless in their coffers, or covering their altars and pretended saints? My name not being asked, the baron and the others called me Lord Palmerston. My baron worshipped Palmerston, but he said it was "Henry the Eighth and Oliver Cromwell they wanted." In opinions and character this fellow-traveller was one of a large class that may one day play a cudgel for what it considers Russian regeneration; a man polite to excess, but, "when scraped, a Tartar," as the poor sledge-drivers who had pulled us out of the pit could witness. This baron's son, a young man of twenty-two, was with us, already proud to employ English oaths and talk of "box," besides being so unpleasantly addicted to rather practical jokes, that on one occasion I was obliged to give him a little unexpected practice in the "noble science," for which his father most politely, and I think sincerely, thanked me.

An officer of infantry, wounded at Inkermann, and now invalided, was another of our party. He was very civil to me, and asked many questions about the English army and navy systems. Of Inkermann, "Ah!" he said, "I was there, and received my wound from an English officer's revolver. Poor fellow! I forgave him; it was his last barrel, and the last shot he ever fired; but he hurled the empty pistol at one of those who were pressing on him, so that he knocked the fellow down, but the next moment he fell, pierced with balls and bayonets. My God! how these few men did fight and die, surprised by a whole army!" He related what,

indeed, I had often heard in Russia, that all the detail of attack was carefully planned in St. Petersburg by the Emperor Nicholas, who was perfectly convinced of its complete success. And it would most certainly have sufficed had that handful of Englishmen but known when it was overmatched. "But this we could not make them understand," he said; "so in time the French came, in overwhelming masses, and our troops were forced to retire. English stupidity lost us the best chance we had during that war." When the express courier reached St. Petersburg with the first news of that defeat, and the entire failure of the carefully devised plan that was to drive the allies into the sea, the emperor, scouting the rumour of defeat, arrived the day before, received the messenger—an officer of rank—as the bearer of joyful tidings. Something, however, in the officer's looks betokened anything but joy, and in breathless silence from the assembled court, the emperor stalked up to the man, seized him by both shoulders, and said with evident effort and concentrated emotion, "Say! speak? Is it victory?"

"My liege, I have instructions. There is the despatch!"

"Speak one word: Victory!—quick."

"Nay, sire, I am distressed to say it is Defeat," replied the officer, and hung his head.

"Liar!" roared the emperor; and with his whole force he flung the messenger of evil to the other side of the room, and walked into the adjoining cabinet with the unopened despatch in his hand.—How far this scene, repeated again by my friend the soldier, is true, I cannot tell, but as it is said to have had many witnesses, so I know it is widely credited among men likely to be right as to such matters.

The only other traveller in our kибитка was a Russianised German: one of a class very common in Russia, and, as a class, inquisitive, crafty, unscrupulous, hating the English with what soul they have, cheating and injuring them when they have the power. Russia is overrun with Germans of this sort, who are to be found in all places except where sound knowledge and honourable dealing are essential. Nearly all the apothecaries are such Germans, and the prices they sell drugs at, are audacious. They get to be stewards, and then woe to the poor peasants. They largely import German girls, who are preferred to Russian by the dissolute. They are confectioners, factors, watchmakers, sausage and ham dealers, organ and knife grinders, anything. When they first invaded the country they were called "neimitz," or dummies, because, unable to speak the language, they talked only by signs. The army itself is overrun with greedy German officers and doctors: too commonly men who, while poor, will submit to any degradation; but who, when they get up in the world a little, are fastidious and proud. The Russians hate them with good cause, because they are cruel, extortionate, tyrannical, and practically useless. Many of the nobility and gentry are married to German women, for the Russian

women are wan, and not usually good-looking. The German wives exert the influence of their husbands in advancing the interests of all their poor relations. Let me illustrate this by a short history, which will show also the state of Russian serfdom under German management.

FACTORY LIFE—UNDER A GERMAN STEWARD.

General R. was a pure Russian, but having in his youth been employed as a diplomatist in England and elsewhere, he became so deeply sensible of the political degradation of his countrymen, and of his own responsibility in relation to his serfs, that when he returned to Russia he obtained the emperor's permission to retire from public life, and devote himself, assisted by his wife (also of an old Russian family), to the task of improving the condition of the ten thousand serfs on his estates. These estates were extensive, had a splendid soil, and happened to be situated in a genial climate. The general himself went to live in the midst of his people, looked into their wants, established schools and churches, as well as factories, corn-mills, sugar-works, adopted agricultural improvements, and increased his wealth. He was the first to set up a cotton-mill in Russia, in order to employ profitably his people and time during the long lazy winter months formerly spent in perfect idleness. The fortunate serfs increased their allotments; the sound of whip or stick was never heard; traders came far distances to trade in the thriving valleys of R., and their produce brought the best prices in the large town, distant only one hundred versts. In all disputes the general himself was judge and jury; he was adviser and friend in all difficulties. Incurable delinquents were punished by being sent off the estate to work, according to the common custom, under other owners, on the "obrok," and on this estate no heavier punishment could be inflicted. He built a country-house, a copy from some English gentleman's seat that he had seen and liked; surrounded it with gardens and a park; erected farm-houses on a large scale; imported implements, cattle, and experienced overseers; and when his barns and coffers were full, and all went well with him and his, he died, beloved and almost worshipped by the men to whom his life had been a blessing. Ten years after the old general's death, I inhabited a wing of his mansion for a twelvemonth, so that I know well what I am relating. Evidences were around me daily, on all sides, of the good that was done, and the cause of the change that followed.

"Ah!" said the old Russian overseer of the cotton-mill, "you should have come in the old general's time. Then, we were men; now, we are beasts. Then, we were all rich; now, we are skinned and robbed of our very flesh. Then, we could eat beef; now, we cannot get enough of 'casha' to keep us alive. Look at me. Am I not as thin as a ghost? The year the general died, I weighed fifteen stone, I had six hundred roubles, saved from rearing poultry, pigs, growing flax, and getting presents from the master. It's

all gone—or," said he, whispering, "they think so. Some of it is buried where they never shall clutch it. Ah! the 'neimitz' came then. They ruined the estate."

"Who is the 'neimitz'?"

"Who, indeed? There came here once, an Englishman as superintendent of these works; I liked him. When the men first went to pay their respects to him, the poor starved-looking beings told their tale in their faces, but poured out also their grievances before him. He said that he was only come to superintend the mechanical processes, that with their social relations he had nothing to do; but whatever was in his power he would do, to make them comfortable. In the mean time he gave them a day's holiday, but our German steward forbade them to take it; that, he said to the Englishman, is against all rules. 'But come,' said the sneak, 'we can make things comfortable by playing into one another's hands. Come to my house to-night and take a glass of schnaps, and we shall talk the matter over; in the mean time I have ordered the engines and works to go on to-morrow as usual.' The Englishman turned him out of the room, and then got the keys of the factory and locked out the work-people, so that they could not go to work. The frightened serfs waited about the doors. The man who gave the keys to the English superintendent, was flogged by the steward. On the same day the Englishman doubled his wages. But he could not fight against a fellow who might send what tales he pleased, to a master in the capital six hundred miles away, so he gave up the contest, and left us to our wretchedness."

It grieves me to tell what I learnt here, and what I saw. The old general had left a son in the army, who succeeded to the family inheritance. The son, immediately on the old man's death, married a very pretty German adventuress whom he had met in one of the more questionable saloons of Moscow. A daughter was born to them, and soon afterwards the husband was seized with a fit and died in a ball-room, also at Moscow. The child being then but three years old, the lady's brother was appointed trustee and administrator of the estate until she came of age—that is to say, was seventeen years old, or married. This man's whole effort was to enrich himself by exhausting the wealth of the place during his trusteeship. A German steward was put in, and every possible thing was done to grind substance out of the poor peasants. The widow, her brother, and daughter lived at Moscow in a round of gaiety and dissipation, never visiting the estates. The steward was becoming very rich. Large sums were being sent to Moscow out of mortgages effected, and instead of the old happiness and contentment amongst the serfs, there was an utter bitterness of destitution. The works were not kept in repair nor properly managed, and the people, become lazy and sullen, were forced to keep the mill going day and night in order to keep up the original rate of production. At four o'clock on Sunday afternoon the work

began, and never stopped till Sunday next at nine A.M., when six hours were allowed for church-going. A double set of hands working alternately, kept the machinery in constant motion: one set working for six hours while the other set lay sleeping in corners. A bell was rung at the end of each six hours, when the sleepers rose up, and those who had been working lay down. This went on night and day. Married women brought their babies to the factory, where I saw them stuck in cotton baskets, where mothers bred, fed, slept, worked, and did all manner of things in the grinding din of work—morality, decency, or cleanliness, impossible and far-off dreams. Indeed, these people had approached more nearly to the condition of brutes than I had thought possible for men and women; what I saw here and heard elsewhere, did, let me own it, turn my heart to a strong prejudice against the Russian Germans. This widow of the last male of the R.s was a German; her brother the trustee was a German; his steward was a German; and all of them were idle and rapacious voluptuaries. The poor girl when she comes of age will find the noble estate left by her Russian grandfather and father ruined irretrievably, and she will be one Russian more hating the "neimitz." I have no doubt whatever that, should a popular outbreak take place and the pent-up fury of the peasantry find vent, the first burst of retribution and vengeance will fall on this part of the population.

Even the neimitz who was our travelling companion did not allow us to reach our journey's end until he had played a revengeful trick on one of us, which made it necessary for us to decide between turning him out of our kibitka, or carrying him on, bound, as a prisoner to Moscow. We turned him out, and, on the morning of the eighth day of a perilous and fatiguing journey, reached Moscow without him.

PURSUIT OF CRICKET UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

I know that we English are an angular and eccentric people—a people that the great flat-iron of civilisation will take a long time smoothing all the puckers and wrinkles out of—but I was scarcely prepared for the following announcement that I saw the other day in a tobacconist's window near the Elephant and Castle:

On Saturday,
A Cricket Match will be played at the Rosemary
Branch, Peckham Rye,
between
Eleven One-armed Men and Eleven One-legged
Men.

The Match to begin at Eleven o'Clock A.M.

Well, I have heard of eccentric things in my time, thought I, but I think this beats them all. I know we are a robust muscular people, who require vigorous exercise, so that we would rather be fighting than doing nothing. Our youth walk, run, shoot, fish, hunt (break their necks, even, in pursuit of health), tramp the

world over, and leave their footprints in Arctic snows and Arabian sands. It is to this outward working of the inner fire that we owe our great circumnavigators, travellers, soldiers, and discoverers. Our English arms have built up half the railways in the world; our emigrants are on every sea; we are the harmless Norsemen of the nineteenth century. We can do (some of us) without working our brains much, but we Saxons must all exert our limbs; we pine if we are pent up at desks and ledgers. We are a race of walkers, sportsmen, travellers, and craftsmen. We are (by our arts and colonising) the peaceful conquerors of the world. The days of the old red-handed conquest being now (as it is generally thought) gone by for ever, here these one-armed men go and caricature the national tendencies.

Such were my patriotic thoughts when I trudged down the Old Kent Road—chiefly remarkable, since the old coaching days, as the former residence of Mr. Greenacre—and made my devious way to Peckham. Under swinging golden hams, golden gridirons, swaying concertinas (marked at a very low figure), past bundles of rusty fire-irons, dirty rolls of carpets, and corpulent dusty feather-beds—past deserted-looking horse-troughs and suburban-looking inns, I took my pilgrim way to the not very blooming Rye of Peckham.

Rows of brick boxes, called streets, half-isolated cottages, clung to by affectionate but dusty vines—eventually a canal, where boatmen smoked and had dreams of coming traffic—a sudden outburst of green fields, that made me think I was looking at streets with green spectacles on—brought me to the trim, neat public-house known by the pleasant aromatic name of “The Rosemary Branch.”

A trim bar-woman, with, perhaps, rather too demonstrative a photograph brooch, stood in front of a row of glass barrels labelled respectively “Shrub,” “Bitters,” and “Sampson,” the latter, I have no doubt, a very strong beverage indeed. Nor did I fail to observe a portrait of the last winner of the Derby over the fireplace, and a little stuffed terrier pup above the glass door leading into the little parlour, where a very comfortable dinner was smoking.

I procured my ticket, and was shown through a deserted billiard-room, and down a back lane, to the cricket-field. I delivered up the blue slip to a very fat man with a child’s voice who sat with an air of suffering at the entrance-wicket, and I was in the eccentric creatures’ innocent field of battle.

There they were, the one-legged and the one-armed, encamped like two neighbouring armies.

Two potboys, girdled with tucked-up aprons white as the froth of bitter-beer, hurried past me as if to relieve the thirst of men wounded in war. After them came odd men carrying more benches for spectators of the one-armed men’s prowess. The one-armed men were having their innings; the fielding of their one-legged adversaries, I could see in a moment, was something painfully wonderful and ludicrously horrible.

Totally indifferent to the mingled humour and horror of the day were the costermongers, who, grouped near the gate, threw a fair-day show over one section of the field. Those mere boys, with hard-lined pale faces and insinuating curls like large fish-hooks on each temple, were totally absorbed in drawing pence from the people of Peckham now that the bloom, so long expected, was undoubtedly on the Rye. There, were boys shooting down an enormous tin telescope for nuts; there, were men bowling clumsily at enormous wooden-headed ninepins. But the crown of the amusements was that corduroy-sheathed lad who had, with true Derby-day alacrity, stuck four slender sticks into hampers of matted sand, and on those shivery columns poised hairy cocoa-nuts, gilt pincushions, and wooden boxes meretriciously covered. One, two—whiz—whirl; what beautiful illustrations of the force of gravity did those boxes and pincushions furnish at three throws a penny! With what an air of sagacious and triumphant foresight did the proprietor bundle up the cudgels under his arm and gingerly replace the glittering prizes!

But while I dally here the eccentric game proceeds; so, avoiding the cannon-shot of chance balls, I pass across the field to the little windowed shed where the scorer sits opposite to the signal-post that, with its 4—6—2 in large white figures, marks the progress of the game. Some boys are playing with a bundle of the large tin numerals that lie at the foot of the signboard-post. Inside the outer and open part of the shed sit a row of Peckham quidnuncs deeply interested in the game—a game which, if it were all innings, I hold would be almost perfect, but, as it is, I deem to be, on the whole, rather wearisome. I seated myself on a garden-roller kept to level the grass, and watched the game. A man driving two calves out of the way of the players informed me that the proceeds of the game were for the benefit of a one-armed man who was going in when the next wicket went down.

The players were not all Peckham men; that one-legged bowler, so deft and ready, I found was a well-known musical barber, a *great dancer*, and I believe a great fisherman, from a distant part of Essex.

The one-legged men were pretty well with the bat, but they were rather beaten when it came to fielding. There was a horrible Holbeinish fun about the way they stumped, trotted, and jolted after the ball. A converging rank of crutches and wooden legs tore down upon the ball from all sides; while the one-armed men, wagging their hooks and stumps, rushed madly from wicket to wicket, fast for a “oner,” faster for “a twoer.” A lean, droll, rather drunk fellow, in white trousers, was the wit of the one-leg party. “Peggy” evidently rejoiced in the fact that he was the lamest man in the field, one leg being stiff from the hip downwards, and the wooden prop reaching far above the knee.

He did not treat the game so much as a matter of science as an affair of pure fun—of

incongruous drollery, with which seriousness was altogether out of place. If there was a five minutes' lull for beer, when the "over" was shouted, Peggy was sure to devote that interval to dancing a double-shuffle in the refreshment tent, where the plates were now being dealt round ready for some future edible game. When he took his place as slip or long-stop, he ran to his post while others walked; or delighted the boys by assuming an air of the intensest eagerness and watchfulness, putting a hand on either knee and bending forward, as if he had sworn that no ball should escape his vigilance; or when a ball did come, by blocking it with his wooden leg, throwing himself on it, or falling over it: an inevitable result, indeed, with nearly all the one-legged faction, as the slightest abruptness or jerk in movement had the result of throwing them off the perpendicular. I do not think that Peggy stopped a single ball unless it hit him; he generally fell over it and lost it until some comrade stumped up, swore at him, and picked the ball out from between his feet or under his arm.

The one-armed men had a much less invalid and veteran air about them. There was a shapely lad in a pink Jersey, who, from having his hand off only at the wrist, merely looked at a distance like a stripling with his hand hidden by a long coat-cuff. But then, again, there was a thickset, sturdy fellow, in a blue cap, of the "one-leg" party, who, though he had lost one foot, seemed to run and walk almost as well as ordinary people. Then, again, on the "one-leg" side, there was an ostentatious amount of infirmity in the shape of one or two pale men with crutches, yet everybody appeared merry and good natured, and determined to enjoy the game to his heart's content; while every time a player made a run, before the dull beat of the bat had died away, there was a shout that made the Peckham welkin ring again, and all the crutches and wooden legs beat tattoos of pure joy and triumph. And when the musical and Terpsichorean barber rattled the wickets or made the balls fly, did not the very plates in the refreshment tent dance with pleasure!

Yet, really, Peggy's conduct was most reprehensible. In spite of his "greyhound-in-the-leash" attitude, he was worse than useless; he kicked at the passing ball, he talked to it, he tumbled down to stop it, but for all the success he attained, he might as well have been away; why, Wilkins, with the long crutches and swinging legs, was three times as useful, though he was slow. I suppose, what with the beer, the heat of the day, the excess of zeal, and the fatigue, Peggy began at last to be pretty well aware that he was not doing much good, for he took to lying a good deal on his back, and to addressing the boys, who buzzed round him like flies, on the necessity of keeping a steady "look-out" at cricket. I do not know what Peggy had been, but he looked like a waterman.

Now, a lad who lost his leg when a baby, as a bystander told me, took up the bat and went

in with calm self-reliance, and the game went forward with the usual concomitants. Now come the tips, the misses, the by-balls, the leg hits, the swinging blows that intend so much and do nothing, the echoing swashing cuts, the lost balls, the stumpings-out, the blocks, the slow treacherous balls, and the spinning, bruising roundhanders; not that our friends of the one leg and one arm swaddled themselves up in any timid paddings or bandages; they put on no india-rubber tubed gloves, no shelter-knuckles, they don no fluted leggings. What is a blow on the knuckles to a man who has lost a leg or an arm, who has felt the surgeon's saw and the keen double-edged knife? Yet all this time there was rather a ghastly reminder of suffering about the whole affair, to my mind. I could fancy the game played by out-patients in some out-lying field of Guy's Hospital. I could believe it a party of convalescents in some field outside Sebastopol. Well, I suppose the fact is, that men don't think much of misfortunes when they are once irretrievable, and that these men felt a pleasure in doing an eccentric thing, in showing how bravely and easily they could overcome an infirmity that to some men appears terrible. After all, one thinks, after seeing such a game, one-legged and one-armed men are not so miserable as people imagine. Nature is kind to us in her compensations.

And all this time my eye was perpetually wandering to that blue bulbing dome and the two little pinnacles, that, though from here no larger than a chimney-piece ornament, is, I have reason to believe, Saint Paul's, some five miles distant as the crow flies. How delicate and clean cut its opaque sapphire—how pleasantly it crowns the horizon! That view of Saint Paul's from the Peckham meadows I can strongly recommend to landscape painters as one of the best, because one of the nearest, suburban views of Saint Paul's. I know it, a little blue mushroom button from Banstead Downs, just cropping up above the grey rim of the horizon, where the dark brown cloud ever lingers to mark out London; I know it, a great palace of air from all the winding reaches of the Thames, but I think I never saw it before so beautiful, so unreal, so visionary, so sublime. It seemed more the presiding genius of the busy, turbulent, uneasy city. I felt quite a love for the old blue monster; the sight of him moved me as the sight of a great army moves me, or as the sight of a fleet beating out to sea, with their white wings set all one way.

And now looking again to the game—the excitement has become tremendous. A man with crutches is in; he props himself artfully up, while he strikes the ball feebly and with lack-lustre stroke. A one-armed man with a wavering sleeve, bowls with his left hand, and makes a complicated business of it: the ball moving in a most eccentric orbit. At the opposite wicket Peggy is entrenched: his attitude is a study for Raphael—intense watchfulness, restless ambition, fond love of glory slightly dashed with inebriation, slightly marred by intoxication,

visible in every motion. Alas! the first fell ball comes and damages his wicket. His perfect disbelief in the reality of such a catastrophe is sublime—it typifies the dogged constancy of a nation that never knows when it is beaten.

The one-arms are rudely exulting as Peggy stumps off, not that he ever made a run, but that the look of the man was so imposing. The *one-legs* droop, the *one-arms* throw up their caps, or dance “breakdowns,” to give vent to their extreme joy. The outlying one-arms skip and trip, the one-legs put their heads together and mutter detracting observations on the one-armed bowling. “There was no knowing what to make of them balls;” “There was no telling where to have them balls;” “They were a spiteful lot, the one-arms, so cheeky, so braggish;” “But the one-legs knew what’s what, and they are going to do the trick yet.”

Now the clatter of knives and forks and plates in the refreshment tent grew perfectly alarming; it was like a sale in a china-shop. The players, heedless of such poor sublunary things as boiled beef and greens and the smoke of flowery potatoes, played more like madmen than sober rational cricketers. St. Paul’s danced before my eyes as if I was playing cup and ball with it, so dazzled did I get with the flying red ball. The leaping catches were wonderful, the leg-hits admirable, the bowling geometrically wonderful, the tips singularly beautiful; the ball smashed at the palings, dashed into thorn bushes, lost itself, broke plates in the refreshment tent, nearly stunned the scorer, knocked down a boy, flew up in the air like a mad thing. As for Peggy’s balustrade leg, had he not occasionally screwed it off to cool himself, it would have been shivered into a thousand pieces. You would have thought, indeed, that the bowler mistook his unfortunate “stick leg” for the wicket, he let fly at it so often and so perversely. But in vain all skill and energy; the one-legs could not get at the ball quick enough, their fielding was not first-rate, the one-arms made a gigantic effort, forged fourteen runs ahead, and won. Peggy performed a *pas seul* expressive of hopeless despair, and stumped off for a pot of stout.

FALLEN LEAVES.

Weary, the cloud droopeth down from the sky,
Dreary, the leaf lieth low;
All things must come to the earth by-and-by,
Out of which all things grow.

Let the wild wind shriek and whistle
Down aisles of the leafless wood;
In our garden let the thistle
Start where the rose-tree stood;
Let the rotting mass fall rotten
With the rain-drops from the eaves;
Let the dead Past lie forgotten
In his grave with the yellow leaves.

Weary, the cloud droopeth down from the sky,
Dreary, the leaf lieth low;
All things must come to the earth by-and-by,
Out of which all things grow.

And again the hawthorn pale
Shall blossom sweet in the spring;
And again the nightingale
In the long blue nights shall sing;
And seas of the wind shall wain
In the light of the golden grain;
But the love that is gone to the grave
Shall never return again.

Weary, the cloud droopeth out of the sky,
Dreary, the leaf lieth low;
All things must come to the earth by-and-by,
Out of which all things grow.

MR. H.’S OWN NARRATIVE.

THERE was lately published in these pages (No. 125, page 589) a paper entitled *FOUR STORIES*. The first of those stories related the strange experience of “a well-known English artist, Mr. H.” On the publication of that account, Mr. H. himself addressed the conductor of this Journal (to his great surprise), and forwarded to him his own narrative of the occurrences in question.

As Mr. H. wrote, without any concealment, in his own name in full, and from his own studio in London, and as there was no possible doubt of his being a real existing person and a responsible gentleman, it became a duty to read his communication attentively. And great injustice having been unconsciously done to it, in the version published as the first of the “*Four Stories*,” it follows here exactly as received. It is, of course, published with the sanction and authority of Mr. H., and Mr. H. has himself corrected the proofs.

Entering on no theory of our own towards the explanation of any part of this remarkable narrative, we have prevailed on Mr. H. to present it without any introductory remarks whatever. It only remains to add, that no one has for a moment stood between us and Mr. H. in this matter. The whole communication is at first hand. On seeing the article, *Four Stories*, Mr. H. frankly and good humouredly wrote, “I am the Mr. H., the living man, of whom mention is made; how my story has been picked up, I do not know, but it is not correctly told; I have it by me, written by myself, and here it is.”

I am a painter. One morning in May, 1858, I was seated in my studio at my usual occupation. At an earlier hour than that at which visits are usually made, I received one from a friend whose acquaintance I had made some year or two previously in Richmond Barracks, Dublin. My acquaintance was a captain in the 3rd West York Militia, and from the hospitable manner in which I had been received while a guest with that regiment, as well as from the intimacy that existed between us personally, it was incumbent on me to offer my visitor suitable refreshments; consequently, two o’clock found us well occupied in conversation, cigars, and a decanter of sherry. About that hour a ring at the bell reminded me of an engagement I had made with a model, or a young person who, having a pretty face and neck, earned a

livelihood by sitting for them to artists. Not being in the humour for work, I arranged with her to come on the following day, promising, of course, to remunerate her for her loss of time, and she went away. In about five minutes she returned, and, speaking to me privately, stated that she had looked forward to the money for the day's sitting, and would be inconvenienced by the want of it; would I let her have a part? There being no difficulty on this point, she again went. Close to the street in which I live there is another of a very similar name, and persons who are not familiar with my address often go to it by mistake. The model's way lay directly through it, and, on arriving there, she was accosted by a lady and gentleman, who asked if she could inform them where I lived? They had forgotten my right address, and were endeavouring to find me by inquiring of persons whom they met; in a few more minutes they were shown into my room.

My new visitors were strangers to me. They had seen a portrait I had painted, and wished for likenesses of themselves and their children. The price I named did not deter them, and they asked to look round the studio to select the style and size they should prefer. My friend of the 3rd West York, with infinite address and humour, took upon himself the office of showman, dilating on the merits of the respective works in a manner that the diffidence that is expected in a professional man when speaking of his own productions would not have allowed me to adopt. The inspection proving satisfactory, they asked whether I could paint the pictures at their house in the country, and there being no difficulty on this point, an engagement was made for the following autumn, subject to my writing to fix the time when I might be able to leave town for the purpose. This being adjusted, the gentleman gave me his card, and they left. Shortly afterwards my friend went also, and on looking for the first time at the card left by the strangers, I was somewhat disappointed to find that though it contained the name of Mr. and Mrs. Kirkbeck, there was no address. I tried to find it by looking at the Court Guide, but it contained no such name, so I put the card in my writing-desk, and forgot for a time the entire transaction.

Autumn came, and with it a series of engagements I had made in the north of England. Towards the end of September, 1858, I was one of a dinner-party at a country-house on the confines of Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. Being a stranger to the family, it was by a mere accident that I was at the house at all. I had arranged to pass a day and a night with a friend in the neighbourhood, who was intimate at the house, and had received an invitation, and the dinner occurring on the evening in question, I had been asked to accompany him. The party was a numerous one, and as the meal approached its termination, and was about to subside into the dessert, the conversation became general. I should here mention that my hearing is defective; at some

times more so than at others, and on this particular evening I was extra deaf—so much so, that the conversation only reached me in the form of a continued din. At one instant, however, I heard a word distinctly pronounced, though it was uttered by a person at a considerable distance from me, and that word was—Kirkbeck. In the business of the London season I had forgotten all about the visitors of the spring, who had left their card without the address. The word reaching me under such circumstances, arrested my attention, and immediately recalled the transaction to my remembrance. On the first opportunity that offered, I asked a person whom I was conversing with if a family of the name in question was resident in the neighbourhood. I was told, in reply, that a Mr. Kirkbeck lived at A—, at the farther end of the county. The next morning I wrote to this person, saying that I believed he called at my studio in the spring, and had made an arrangement with me, which I was prevented fulfilling by there being no address on his card; furthermore, that I should shortly be in his neighbourhood on my return from the north, but should I be mistaken in addressing him, I begged he would not trouble himself to reply to my note. I gave as my address, The Post-office, York. On applying there three days afterwards, I received a note from Mr. Kirkbeck, stating that he was very glad he had heard from me, and that if I would call on my return, he would arrange about the pictures; he also told me to write a day before I proposed coming, that he might not otherwise engage himself. It was ultimately arranged that I should go to his house the succeeding Saturday, stay till Monday morning, transact afterwards what matters I had to attend to in London, and return in a fortnight to execute the commissions.

The day having arrived for my visit, directly after breakfast I took my place in the morning train from York to London. The train would stop at Doncaster, and after that at Retford junction, where I should have to get out in order to take the line through Lincoln to A—. The day was cold, wet, foggy, and in every way as disagreeable as I have ever known a day to be in an English October. The carriage in which I was seated had no other occupant than myself, but at Doncaster a lady got in. My place was back to the engine and next to the door. As that is considered the ladies' seat, I offered it to her; she, however, very graciously declined it, and took the corner opposite, saying, in a very agreeable voice, that she liked to feel the breeze on her cheek. The next few minutes were occupied in locating herself. There was the cloak to be spread under her, the skirts of the dress to be arranged, the gloves to be tightened, and such other trifling arrangements of plumage as ladies are wont to make before settling themselves comfortably at church or elsewhere, the last and most important being the placing back over her hat the veil that concealed her features. I could then see that the

lady was young, certainly not more than two or three-and-twenty; but being moderately tall, rather robust in make, and decided in expression, she might have been two or three years younger. I suppose that her complexion would be termed a medium one; her hair being of a bright brown, or auburn, while her eyes and rather decidedly marked eyebrows were nearly black. The colour of her cheek was of that pale transparent hue that sets off to such advantage large expressive eyes, and an equable firm expression of mouth. On the whole, the ensemble was rather handsome than beautiful, her expression having that agreeable depth and harmony about it that rendered her face and features, though not strictly regular, infinitely more attractive than if they had been modelled upon the strictest rules of symmetry.

It is no small advantage on a wet day and a dull long journey to have an agreeable companion, one who can converse, and whose conversation has sufficient substance in it to make one forget the length and the dreariness of the journey. In this respect I had no deficiency to complain of, the lady being decidedly and agreeably conversational. When she had settled herself to her satisfaction, she asked to be allowed to look at my Bradshaw, and not being a proficient in that difficult work, she requested my aid in ascertaining at what time the train passed through Retford again on its way back from London to York. The conversation turned afterwards on general topics, and, somewhat to my surprise, she led it into such particular subjects as I might be supposed to be more especially familiar with; indeed, I could not avoid remarking that her entire manner, while it was anything but forward, was that of one who had either known me personally or by report. There was in her manner a kind of confidential reliance when she listened to me that is not usually accorded to a stranger, and sometimes she actually seemed to refer to different circumstances with which I had been connected in times past. After about three-quarters of an hour's conversation the train arrived at Retford, where I was to change carriages. On my alighting and wishing her good morning, she made a slight movement of the hand as if she meant me to shake it, and on my doing so she said, by way of adieu, "I dare say we shall meet again;" to which I replied, "I hope that we shall all meet again," and so parted, she going on the line towards London, and I through Lincolnshire to A—. The remainder of the journey was cold, wet, and dreary. I missed the agreeable conversation, and tried to supply its place with a book I had brought with me from York, and the Times newspaper, which I had procured at Retford. But the most disagreeable journey comes to an end at last, and half-past five in the evening found me at the termination of mine. A carriage was waiting for me at the station, where Mr. Kirkbeck was also expected by the same train, but as he did not appear it was concluded he would come by the next—half an hour later; accordingly, the carriage drove away with myself only.

The family being from home at the moment, and the dinner hour being seven, I went at once to my room to unpack and to dress; having completed these operations, I descended to the drawing-room. It probably wanted some time to the dinner hour, as the lamps were not lighted, but in their place a large blazing fire threw a flood of light into every corner of the room, and more especially over a lady who, dressed in deep black, was standing by the chimney-piece warming a very handsome foot on the edge of the fender. Her face being turned away from the door by which I had entered, I did not at first see her features; on my advancing into the middle of the room, however, the foot was immediately withdrawn, and she turned round to accost me, when, to my profound astonishment, I perceived that it was none other than my companion in the railway carriage. She betrayed no surprise at seeing me; on the contrary, with one of those agreeable joyous expressions that make the plainest woman appear beautiful, she accosted me with, "I said we should meet again."

My bewilderment at the moment almost deprived me of utterance. I knew of no railway or other means by which she could have come. I had certainly left her in a London train, and had seen it start, and the only conceivable way in which she could have come was by going on to Peterborough and then returning by a branch to A—, a circuit of about ninety miles. As soon as my surprise enabled me to speak, I said that I wished I had come by the same conveyance as herself.

"That would have been rather difficult," she rejoined.

At this moment the servant came with the lamps, and informed me that his master had just arrived and would be down in a few minutes.

The lady took up a book containing some engravings, and having singled one out (a portrait of Lady —), asked me to look at it well and tell her whether I thought it like her.

I was engaged trying to get up an opinion, when Mr. and Mrs. Kirkbeck entered, and shaking me heartily by the hand, apologised for not being at home to receive me; the gentleman ending by requesting me to take Mrs. Kirkbeck in to dinner.

The lady of the house having taken my arm, we marched on. I certainly hesitated a moment to allow Mr. Kirkbeck to pass on first with the mysterious lady in black, but Mrs. Kirkbeck not seeming to understand it, we passed on at once. The dinner-party consisting of us four only, we fell into our respective places at the table without difficulty, the mistress and master of the house at the top and bottom, the lady in black and myself on each side. The dinner passed much as is usual on such occasions. I, having to play the guest, directed my conversation principally, if not exclusively, to my host and hostess, and I cannot call to mind that I or any one else once addressed the lady opposite. Seeing this, and remembering something that looked like a slight want of attention to her on coming

into the dining-room, I at once concluded that she was the governess. I observed, however, that she made an excellent dinner; she seemed to appreciate both the beef and the tart as well as a glass of claret afterwards; probably she had had no luncheon, or the journey had given her an appetite.

The dinner ended, the ladies retired, and after the usual port, Mr. Kirkbeck and I joined them in the drawing-room. By this time, however, a much larger party had assembled. Brothers and sisters-in-law had come in from their residences in the neighbourhood, and several children, with Miss Hardwick, their governess, were also introduced to me. I saw at once that my supposition as to the lady in black being the governess was incorrect. After passing the time necessarily occupied in complimenting the children, and saying something to the different persons to whom I was introduced, I found myself again engaged in conversation with the lady of the railway carriage, and as the topic of the evening had referred principally to portrait-painting, she continued the subject.

"Do you think you could paint my portrait?" the lady inquired.

"Yes, I think I could, if I had the opportunity."

"Now, look at my face well; do you think you should recollect my features?"

"Yes, I am sure I should never forget your features."

"Of course I might have expected you to say that; but do you think you could do me from recollection?"

"Well, if it be necessary, I will try; but can't you give me any sittings?"

"No, quite impossible; it could not be. It is said that the print I showed to you before dinner is like me; do you think so?"

"Not much," I replied; "it has not your expression. If you can give me only one sitting, it would be better than none."

"No; I don't see how it could be."

The evening being by this time rather far advanced, and the chamber candles being brought in, on the plea of being rather tired, she shook me heartily by the hand, and wished me good night. My mysterious acquaintance caused me no small pondering during the night. I had never been introduced to her, I had not seen her speak to any one during the entire evening, not even to wish them good night—how she got across the country was an inexplicable mystery. Then, why did she wish me to paint her from memory, and why could she not give me even one sitting? Finding the difficulties of a solution to these questions rather increase upon me, I made up my mind to defer further consideration of them till breakfast-time, when I supposed the matter would receive some elucidation.

The breakfast now came, but with it no lady in black. The breakfast over, we went to church, came home to luncheon, and so on through the day, but still no lady, neither any reference to her. I then concluded that she must be some

relative, who had gone away early in the morning to visit another member of the family living close by. I was much puzzled, however, by no reference whatever being made to her, and finding no opportunity of leading any part of my conversation with the family towards the subject, I went to bed the second night more puzzled than ever. On the servant coming in in the morning, I ventured to ask him the name of the lady who dined at the table on the Saturday evening, to which he answered:

"A lady, sir? No lady, only Mrs. Kirkbeck, sir."

"Yes, the lady that sat opposite me dressed in black?"

"Perhaps, Miss Hardwick, the governess, sir?"

"No, not Miss Hardwick; she came down afterwards."

"No lady as I see, sir."

"Oh dear me, yes, the lady dressed in black that was in the drawing-room when I arrived, before Mr. Kirkbeck came home?"

The man looked at me with surprise as if he doubted my sanity, and only answered, "I never see any lady, sir," and then left.

The mystery now appeared more impenetrable than ever—I thought it over in every possible aspect, but could come to no conclusion upon it. Breakfast was early that morning, in order to allow of my catching the morning train to London. The same cause also slightly hurried us, and allowed no time for conversation beyond that having direct reference to the business that brought me there; so, after arranging to return to paint the portraits on that day three weeks, I made my adieu, and took my departure for town.

It is only necessary for me to refer to my second visit to that house, in order to state that I was assured most positively, both by Mr. and Mrs. Kirkbeck, that no fourth person dined at the table on the Saturday evening in question. Their recollection was clear on the subject, as they had debated whether they should ask Miss Hardwick, the governess, to take the vacant seat, but had decided not to do so; neither could they recall to mind any such person as I described in the whole circle of their acquaintance.

Some weeks passed. It was close upon Christmas. The light of a short winter day was drawing to a close, and I was seated at my table, writing letters for the evening post. My back was towards the folding-doors leading into the room in which my visitors usually waited. I had been engaged some minutes in writing, when, without hearing or seeing anything, I became aware that a person had come through the folding-doors, and was then standing beside me. I turned, and beheld the lady of the railway carriage. I suppose that my manner indicated that I was somewhat startled, as the lady, after the usual salutation, said, "Pardon me for disturbing you. You did not hear me come in." Her manner, though it was more quiet and subdued than I had known it

before, was hardly to be termed grave, still less sorrowful. There was a change, but it was that kind of change only which may often be observed from the frank impulsiveness of an intelligent young lady, to the composure and self-possession of that same young lady when she is either betrothed or has recently become a matron. She asked me whether I had made any attempt at a likeness of her. I was obliged to confess that I had not. She regretted it much, as she wished one for her father. She had brought an engraving (a portrait of Lady M. A.) with her that she thought would assist me. It was like the one she had asked my opinion upon at the house in Lincolnshire. It had always been considered very like her, and she would leave it with me. Then (putting her hand impressively on my arm) she added, "She really would be most thankful and grateful to me if I would do it" (and, if I recollect rightly, she added), "*as much depended on it.*" Seeing she was so much in earnest, I took up my sketch-book, and by the dim light that was still remaining began to make a rapid pencil sketch of her. On observing my doing so, however, instead of giving me what assistance she was able, she turned away under pretence of looking at the pictures around the room, occasionally passing from one to another so as to enable me to catch a momentary glimpse of her features. In this manner I made two hurried but rather expressive sketches of her, which being all that the declining light would allow me to do, I shut my book, and she prepared to leave. This time, instead of the usual "Good morning," she wished me an impressively pronounced "Good-by," firmly holding rather than shaking my hand while she said it. I accompanied her to the door, outside of which she seemed rather to fade into the darkness than to pass through it. But I refer this impression to my own fancy.

I immediately inquired of the servant why she had not announced the visitor to me. She stated that she was not aware there had been one, and that any one who had entered must have done so when she had left the street door open about half an hour previously, while she went across the road for a moment.

Soon after this occurred I had to fulfil an engagement at a house near Bosworth Field, in Leicestershire. I left town on a Friday, having sent some pictures, that were too large to take with me, by the luggage train a week previously, in order that they might be at the house on my arrival, and occasion me no loss of time in waiting for them. On getting to the house, however, I found that they had not been heard of, and on inquiring at the station, it was stated that a case similar to the one I described had passed through and gone on to Leicester, where it probably still was. It being Friday, and past the hour for the post, there was no possibility of getting a letter to Leicester before Monday morning, as the luggage office would be closed there on the Sunday; consequently, I could in no case expect the arrival of the pictures before the succeeding Tuesday or Wednesday. The

loss of three days would be a serious one; therefore, to avoid it, I suggested to my host that I should leave immediately to transact some business in South Staffordshire, as I should be obliged to attend to it before my return to town, and if I could see about it in the vacant interval thus thrown upon my hands, it would be saving me the same amount of time after my visit to his house was concluded. This arrangement meeting with his ready assent, I hastened to the Atherstone station on the Trent Valley Railway. By reference to Bradshaw, I found that my route lay through L—, where I was to change carriages, to S—, in Staffordshire. I was just in time for the train that would put me down at L— at eight in the evening, and a train was announced to start from L— for S— at ten minutes after eight, answering, as I concluded, to the train in which I was about to travel. I therefore saw no reason to doubt but that I should get to my journey's end the same night; but on my arriving at L— I found my plans entirely frustrated. The train arrived punctually, and I got out intending to wait on the platform for the arrival of the carriages for the other line. I found, however, that though the two lines crossed at L—, they did not communicate with each other, the L— station on the Trent Valley line being on one side of the town, and the L— station on the South Staffordshire line on the other. I also found that there was not time to get to the other station so as to catch the train the same evening; indeed, the train had just that moment passed on a lower level beneath my feet, and to get to the other side of the town, where it would stop for two minutes only, was out of the question. There was, therefore, nothing for it but to put up at the Swan Hotel for the night. I have an especial dislike to passing an evening at an hotel in a country town. Dinner at such places I never take, as I had rather go without than have such as I am likely to get. Books are never to be had, the country newspapers do not interest me. The Times I have spelt through on my journey. The society I am likely to meet have few ideas in common with myself. Under such circumstances, I usually resort to a meat tea to while away the time, and when that is over, occupy myself in writing letters.

This was the first time I had been in L—, and while waiting for the tea, it occurred to me how, on two occasions within the past six months, I had been on the point of coming to that very place, at one time to execute a small commission for an old acquaintance, resident there, and another, to get the materials for a picture I proposed painting of an incident in the early life of Dr. Johnson. I should have come on each of these occasions had not other arrangements diverted my purpose and caused me to postpone the journey indefinitely. The thought, however, would occur to me, "How strange! Here I am at L—, by no intention of my own, though I have twice tried to get here and been balked." When I had done tea,

I thought I might as well write to an acquaintance I had known some years previously, and who lived in the Cathedral-close, asking him to come and pass an hour or two with me. Accordingly, I rang for the waitress and asked:

"Does Mr. Lute live in Lichfield?"

"Yes, sir."

"Cathedral-close?"

"Yes, sir."

"Can I send a note to him?"

"Yes, sir."

I wrote the note, saying where I was, and asking if he would come for an hour or two and talk over old matters. The note was taken; in about twenty minutes a person of gentlemanly appearance, and what might be termed the advanced middle age, entered the room with my note in his hand, saying that I had sent him a letter, he presumed, by mistake, as he did not know my name. Seeing instantly that he was not the person I intended to write to, I apologised, and asked whether there was not another Mr. Lute living in L—?

"No, there was none other."

"Certainly," I rejoined, "my friend must have given me his right address, for I had written to him on other occasions here. He was a fair young man, he succeeded to an estate in consequence of his uncle having been killed while hunting with the Quorn hounds, and he married about two years since a lady of the name of Fairbairn."

The stranger very composedly replied, "You are speaking of Mr. Clyne; he did live in the Cathedral-close, but he has now gone away."

The stranger was right, and in my surprise I exclaimed:

"Oh dear, to be sure, that is the name; what could have made me address you instead? I really beg your pardon; my writing to you, and unconsciously guessing your name, is one of the most extraordinary and unaccountable things I ever did. Pray pardon me."

He continued very quietly,

"There is no need of apology; it happens that you are the very person I most wished to see. You are a painter, and I want you to paint a portrait of my daughter; can you come to my house immediately for the purpose?"

I was rather surprised at finding myself known by him, and the turn matters had taken being so entirely unexpected, I did not at the moment feel inclined to undertake the business; I therefore explained how I was situated, stating that I had only the next day and Monday at my disposal. He, however, pressed me so earnestly, that I arranged to do what I could for him in those two days, and having put up my baggage, and arranged other matters, I accompanied him to his house. During the walk home he scarcely spoke a word, but his taciturnity seemed only a continuance of his quiet composure at the inn. On our arrival he introduced me to his daughter Maria, and then left the room. Maria Lute was a fair and a decidedly handsome girl of about fifteen; her manner was, however, in advance of her years, and evinced that self-possession, and,

in the favourable sense of the term, that womanliness, that is only seen at such an early age in girls that have been left motherless, or from other causes thrown much on their own resources.

She had evidently not been informed of the purpose of my coming, and only knew that I was to stay there for the night; she therefore excused herself for a few moments, that she might give the requisite directions to the servants as to preparing my room. When she returned, she told me that I should not see her father again that evening, the state of his health having obliged him to retire for the night; but she hoped I should be able to see him some time on the morrow. In the mean time, she hoped I would make myself quite at home, and call for anything I wanted. She, herself, was sitting in the drawing-room, but perhaps I should like to smoke and take something; if so, there was a fire in the housekeeper's room, and she would come and sit with me, as she expected the medical attendant every minute, and he would probably stay to smoke, and take something. As the little lady seemed to recommend this course, I readily complied. I did not smoke, or take anything, but sat down by the fire, when she immediately joined me. She conversed well and readily, and with a command of language singular in a person so young. Without being disagreeably inquisitive, or putting any question to me, she seemed desirous of learning the business that had brought me to the house. I told her that her father wished me to paint either her portrait or that of a sister of hers, if she had one.

She remained silent and thoughtful for a moment, and then seemed to comprehend it at once. She told me that a sister of hers, an only one, to whom her father was devotedly attached, died near four months previously; that her father had never yet recovered from the shock of her death. He had often expressed the most earnest wish for a portrait of her; indeed, it was his one thought, and she hoped, if something of the kind could be done, it would improve his health. Here she hesitated, stammered, and burst into tears. After a while she continued: "It is no use hiding from you what you must very soon be aware of. Papa is insane—he has been so ever since dear Caroline was buried. He says he is always seeing dear Caroline, and he is subject to fearful delusions. The doctor says he cannot tell how much worse he may be, and that everything dangerous, like knives or razors, are to be kept out of his reach. It was necessary you should not see him again this evening, as he was unable to converse properly, and I fear the same may be the case to-morrow; but perhaps you can stay over Sunday, and I may be able to assist you in doing what he wishes." I asked whether they had any materials for making a likeness—a photograph, a sketch, or anything else for me to go from. "No, they had nothing." "Could she describe her clearly?" She thought she could; and there was a print that was very

much like her, but she had mislaid it. I mentioned that with such disadvantages, and in such an absence of materials, I did not anticipate a satisfactory result. I had painted portraits under such circumstances, but their success much depended upon the powers of description of the persons who were to assist me by their recollection; in some instances I had attained a certain amount of success, but in most the result was quite a failure. The medical attendant came, but I did not see him. I learnt, however, that he ordered a strict watch to be kept on his patient till he came again the next morning. Seeing the state of things, and how much the little lady had to attend to, I retired early to bed. The next morning I heard that her father was decidedly better; he had inquired earnestly on waking whether I was really in the house, and at breakfast-time he sent down to say that he hoped nothing would prevent my making an attempt at the portrait immediately, and he expected to be able to see me in the course of the day.

Directly after breakfast I set to work, aided by such description as the sister could give me. I tried again and again, but without success, or, indeed, the least prospect of it. The features, I was told, were separately like, but the expression was not. I toiled on the greater part of the day with no better result. The different studies I made were taken up to the invalid, but the same answer was always returned—no resemblance. I had exerted myself to the utmost, and, in fact, was not a little fatigued by so doing—a circumstance that the little lady evidently noticed, as she expressed herself most grateful for the interest she could see I took in the matter, and referred the unsuccessful result entirely to her want of powers of description. She also said it was so provoking! she had a print—a portrait of a lady—that was so like, but it had gone—she had missed it from her book for three weeks past. It was the more disappointing, as she was sure it would have been of such great assistance. I asked if she could tell me who the print was of, as if I knew, I could easily procure one in London. She answered, Lady M. A. Immediately the name was uttered the whole scene of the lady of the railway carriage presented itself to me. I had my sketch-book in my portmanteau up-stairs, and, by a fortunate chance, fixed in it was the print in question, with the two pencil sketches. I instantly brought them down, and showed them to Maria Lute. She looked at them for a moment, turned her eyes full upon me, and said slowly, and with something like fear in her manner, "Where did you get these?" Then quicker, and without waiting for my answer, "Let me take them instantly to papa." She was away ten minutes, or more; when she returned, her father came with her. He did not wait for salutations, but said, in a tone and manner I had not observed in him before, "I was right all the time; it was you that I saw with her, and these sketches are from her, and from no one else. I value them more than all

my possessions, except this dear child." The daughter also assured me that the print I had brought to the house must be the one taken from the book about three weeks before, in proof of which she pointed out to me the gum marks at the back, which exactly corresponded with those left on the blank leaf. From the moment the father saw these sketches his mental health returned.

I was not allowed to touch either of the pencil drawings in the sketch-book, as it was feared I might injure them; but an oil picture from them was commenced immediately, the father sitting by me hour after hour, directing my touches, conversing rationally, and indeed cheerfully, while he did so. He avoided direct reference to his delusions, but from time to time led the conversation to the manner in which I had originally obtained the sketches. The doctor came in the evening, and, after extolling the particular treatment he had adopted, pronounced his patient decidedly, and he believed permanently, improved.

The next day being Sunday, we all went to church. The father, for the first time since his bereavement. During a walk which he took with me after luncheon, he again approached the subject of the sketches, and after some seeming hesitation as to whether he should confide in me or not, said, "Your writing to me by name, from the inn at L—, was one of those inexplicable circumstances that I suppose it is impossible to clear up. I knew you, however, directly I saw you; when those about me considered that my intellect was disordered, and that I spoke incoherently, it was only because I saw things that they did not. Since her death, I know, with a certainty that nothing will ever disturb, that at different times I have been in the actual and visible presence of my dear daughter that is gone—oftener, indeed, just after her death than latterly. Of the many times that this has occurred, I distinctly remember once seeing her in a railway carriage, speaking to a person seated opposite; who that person was I could not ascertain, as my position seemed to be immediately behind him. I next saw her at a dinner-table, with others, and amongst those others unquestionably I saw yourself. I afterwards learnt that at that time I was considered to be in one of my longest and most violent paroxysms, as I continued to see her speaking to you, in the midst of a large assembly, for some hours. Again I saw her, standing by your side, while you were engaged in either writing or drawing. I saw her once again afterwards, but the next time I saw yourself was in the inn parlour."

The picture was proceeded with the next day, and on the day after the face was completed, and I afterwards brought it with me to London to finish.

I have often seen Mr. L. since that period; his health is perfectly re-established, and his manner and conversation are as cheerful as can be expected within a few years of so great a bereavement.

The portrait now hangs in his bedroom, with the print and the two sketches by the side, and written beneath is: "C. L., 13th September, 1858, aged 22."

THE TERRESTRIAL PARADISE.

"I WOULD examine the true seat of that Terrestrial Paradise," says Burton, in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*. The desire was not peculiar to him; for the subject has employed the wits of countless scholars, and has drawn hundreds of travellers in old times to the distant lands of Asia, where, if they did not discover what they sought, they at least found a goodly store of strange facts and stranger fancies, the bright Aurora of that more certain geographical knowledge which we now possess. Not satisfied that the Bible should leave the exact place of Paradise undefined, the various explorers made a very science of guesswork, and quarrelled with one another as to the relative value of their guesses. For it is one of the noteworthy characteristics of the human mind that it will needs hanker after reducing to the most precise and mechanical form that which is really more impressive by reason of its vagueness. Enthusiasts have been known to ascend Mount Ararat that they might see whether there were any remains of Noah's Ark on the top; and the schoolmen of former ages consumed their lives in disputing as to the shape and elemental composition of angels and of devils, the exact locality and dimensions of hell, the nature of the fire burning there, the number of spirits who could dance on the point of a needle, the character of the earth's centre, the quarter of the world where Ophir was, the precise day of the month on which Adam was born, the language he spoke, the genus and species of the Tree of Knowledge, the name which Satan bore before his fall, the delicate question whether that potentate be adorned with a tail or not, and the like exquisite refinements of curiosity. What wonder, then, that the site of Paradise should be eagerly sought for and fiercely argued over?

Sir Walter Raleigh, in his *History of the World* (a wonderful production of human industry and learning, written in noble English), devotes the whole of chapter iii., consisting of fifteen sections, to a discourse on Paradise, its situation, geographical features, soil, climate, &c. Sir Walter is very strong in denouncing the opinion that there was never any real, physical Paradise at all, and that the description given by Moses is entirely mystical and allegorical; though this view was maintained by no less authorities than Origen, Philo, Francisus Georgius, St. Ambrose, and some others. The first three of these writers contended that the four rivers of Paradise meant the four cardinal virtues (viz. justice, temperance, fortitude, and prudence), or else the four chief luxuries of life—oil, wine, milk, and honey. St. Ambrose set Paradise in the virtues of the mind, declaring that by the Garden of Eden was signified the Soul; by Adam, Understanding; by Eve, the

Senses; by the Serpent, Delectation; by the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, Sapience; and by the rest of the trees the virtues of the mind.

Augustin Chrysamensis was of opinion that Paradise was not merely defaced after the expulsion of Adam, but absolutely and utterly destroyed, so that the seekers after it look for that which has now no existence whatever; and to this conception Luther was thought to incline. The Manichæans and some modern authors affirm that, when man was created, the whole earth was an Eden, though, according to certain writers, there was one special part more exquisite than the rest, wherein Adam and Eve resided. Goropius Becanus places Paradise near the river Acesines, on the confines of India; Tertullian, Bonaventura, and Durandus affirm that it was under the Equinoctial; while another authority contends that it was situated in a region which we now associate with anything but paradisaical ideas—viz. beneath the North Pole. It is worthy of remark that the Arctic regions were long associated with ideas of enchantment and beauty—mainly, no doubt, because of their remoteness and mystery. The ancients believed that in the extreme North the sound of the sun might be heard as he issued out of the ocean, and that the gods might be seen walking, in awful majesty, about the lonely shores of the world's end. Virgil places the happy land of the ever-joyous Hyperboreans under the North Pole; and in more modern times it was thought by some of the great navigators that behind the farthest circles of "thick-ribbed ice," there was a country of surpassing and supernatural loveliness. Peter Comestor, in describing the site of Paradise, seems to suggest the neighbourhood of the North Pole. Paradise, says he, "is a most pleasant place, severed from our habitable zone by a long tract of land and sea, and elevated so that it reaches to the globe of the moon." A similar opinion is expressed by Moses Barcephas, who says that "Paradise is set in a region far raised above the part which we inhabit; whereby it comes to pass that from thence those rivers" (the four rivers mentioned in the Bible) "fall down with such a headlong violence as words cannot express, and, being impelled by that force, are carried under the deep ocean, and again rise and boil up in this, our habitable world." Ephram gives another account, which has a certain cloudy vastness and grandeur: "Paradise," he writes, "encompasses or embraces the whole earth, and is so set beyond the ocean-sea as to environ the orb of the earth on every side, as the orb of the moon embraces the moon itself."

The number of guesses as to the situation of Paradise are, indeed, almost countless. Besides the localities already indicated, it has been placed on Mount Ararat; in a plain on the summit of Mount Taurus; in the island of Ceylon (where there is a mountain called the Peak of Adam, underneath which the natives tell you that the first man lies buried, and whereon they show the gigantic impress of his

foot); in Sumatra; in the Canaries; in the Holy Land; in Persia; in Syria; in Ethiopia; in the land now covered by the Caspian Sea; in the utmost southern regions; in the moon; in the Seventh Heaven, according to Mahomet (but the last two assertions abandon the idea of a Terrestrial Paradise altogether); and a vast central part of the globe, comprising a large piece of Asia and a portion of Africa, the four rivers being the Ganges, the Tigris, the Euphrates, and the Nile. Nay, an American writer has been bold enough to assert that Adam and Eve were created in a Transatlantic Paradise. The most commonly received opinion is, that it was situated between the confluence and the divergence of the Euphrates and the Tigris, two out of the four rivers which watered the realm of Adam and Eve. This is apparently the locality somewhat vaguely indicated by Milton in the Fourth Book of *Paradise Lost*.

It should be observed that writers in general frequently confound the terms "Eden" and "Paradise," whereas there is a clear distinction between them. Eden (which is a Hebrew word, signifying "pleasure") was the most choice and exquisite part of the world, but Paradise was the most choice and exquisite part of Eden. This idea of a peculiar and special seat of pleasure is conveyed by Moses in the expression, "the garden of Eden," which may be conceived as the innermost sanctuary of delight and primal loveliness. Milton, of course, preserved the distinction:

So on he fares, and to the border comes
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,
As with a rural mound, the champain head
Of a steep wilderness.

Paradise, then, was in the middle Eden; and in the middle of Paradise were the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge; which gives Sir Thomas Browne, in his *Garden of Cyrus*, occasion to say, in his lofty manner, that, "whatever was the ambient figure" of Paradise, "there wanted not a centre and rule of decussation." The outer wall of "the garden of Eden" is described by Sir John Mandeville, though not on his own authority, for he very honestly confesses that he never saw it. "Of Paradise," he writes, in that spirit of child-like faith which we half smile at and half love, "ne cannot I speak properly; for I was not there. It is far beyond" (that is, beyond the limit of his wanderings); "and also I was not worthy. But what I have heard say of wise men beyond, I shall tell you with good will. Paradise Terrestre, as wise men say, is the highest place of earth—that is, in all the world; and it is so high that it toucheth nigh to the circle of the moon. . . . For it is so high that the flood of Noah ne might not come to it; albeit it did cover all the earth of the world, all ab', and aboven and beneath, save Paradise alone. And this Paradise is enclosed all ab' with a wall, and men wis not whereof it is; for the walls be covered all over with moss, as it seemeth. And it seemeth not that the wall is stone of nature. And that wall

stretcheth from the south to the north, and it hath not but one entry, that is closed with fire burning; so that no man that is mortal ne dare not enter." A very grand and poetical account of Paradise, as seen from afar, is given in the old romance of Dr. Faustus, translated from the German in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The Doctor is on his travels with Mephistopheles, and is standing on the summit of Mount Caucasus:

And, as he looked towards the East, he saw a mighty clear streak of fire coming from heaven upon earth, even as if it had been one of the beams of the sun. He saw in the water four mighty waters springing: one had his course towards India, the second towards Egypt, the third and fourth towards Armenia. When he saw these, he would needs know of his spirit [Mephistopheles] what waters they were, and from whence they came: his spirit gave him gently an answer, saying, "It is Paradise that lyeth so far in the East—the garden that God himself hath planted with all manner of pleasure; and the fiery stream which thou seest is the wall or fence of the garden; but the clear light that thou seest afar off, that is the angel that hath the custody thereof with a fiery sword. And, although thou thinkest thyself to be hard by, thou art yet further thither from hence than thou hast ever been. The water that thou seest divided in four parts is the water that issueth out of the well in the middle of Paradise. The first is called Ganges, or Pison; the second, Gihon; the third, Tigris; and the fourth, Euphrates. Also thou seest that he [the angel] standeth under Libra and Aries, right towards the zenith; and upon this fiery wall standeth the angel Michael, with his flaming sword, to keep the Tree of Life, which he hath in charge." But the spirit said to Faustus, "Neither thou, nor I, nor any after us, yea, all men whatsoever are denied to visit or come any nearer than we be." (Part i. chap. xxiii.)

It will be seen that in this and in the passage from Sir John Mandeville there is a mingling of various traditions; but the fiery sword is from the Mosaic account. Hence also Milton derives his "brandished sword of God," which "blazed, fierce as a comet," when, at the expulsion of Adam and Eve,

They, looking back, all the eastern side beheld,
Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
Waved over by that flaming brand; the gate
With dreadful faces throng'd, and fiery arms.

That Moses, in speaking of Eden, contemplated the country watered by the Tigris and the Euphrates—the land of the great city of Babylon—is rendered probable by many traditions lasting for ages after the time of the great Hebrew law-giver. Not only were there a district called Eden and a town called Paradisus in Syria—a neighbouring country to Mesopotamia—but in Mesopotamia itself there is a certain region which, as late as the year 1552, was called Eden. It is mentioned in two Epistles of the Nestorian Christians to the Pope, bearing date that year; and it is called an island in the Tigris.

Sir Walter Raleigh finds in "the strange fertility and happiness of the Babylonian soil" a further argument that Eden must have been situated

Adonis. They are all so many versions of the old paradisiacal tradition, and will last side by side with it while books endure.

Pleasant is it to think that the surface of the globe is dotted all over with these imaginary Edens; pleasanter still that, with the aid of truth and affection, we may make our own Terrestrial Paradise wherever four walls, however humble, enclose the enchanted ground called Home.

OPERATING FOR A RISE.

In the most luxurious of rocking-chairs, enjoying the cool sea-breeze of evening and the cigarito of tranquillity under the leafy canopy of a trellised vine, and contemplating the dark green fig-trees and bananas of his garden, sat the worthiest of Mexican hidalgos, Don Ramon Redondo. To the careless observer he was a picture of perfect and rather sensuous happiness, so regular were the puffs of blue smoke from his nostrils, and so calm was the gaze he occasionally directed through a gap in the hedge of prickly-pear towards the little harbour where his own schooner, the pride of his heart and the boast of all the inhabitants of the town of Milcarrambas, was lying at anchor, the tricolor of the Republic proudly waving at her peak. Everything around him spoke of peace; from within the house, came the voices of his younger children at play, and he could hear the hinnying of the sleek mules, which he loved almost as well, as they ate their allowance of maize in the adjoining *corral*. Yet the heart of Don Ramon was troubled, and beneath that deceptive mask of dreamy apathy and apparent vacuity of thought, a host of angry feelings occupied his mind, and he was strongly inclined to believe that in the whole state there could not be found a gentleman less appreciated and worse treated than himself. The main grievance affecting him, and which had been the means of introducing all the others to his notice, was not, indeed, of a very overwhelming nature. It consisted merely in the fact that, owing to its being Good Friday, he not only had been compelled to forego his morning chocolate, his mid-day breakfast, and the plentiful and succulent evening meal, but had been obliged to mock his glorious appetite and endanger his valuable health with one shadowy and uninviting repast of thin corn-cakes and water—a fluid of which he was not in the habit of consuming a great quantity, although admitting its usefulness for the irrigation of the soil and the purposes of navigation. As a good Catholic, Don Ramon ought to have borne all this with patience, looking forward with pious cheerfulness to the compensations of the morrow; but being a philosopher without knowing it, like Titus, though for a different reason, he brooded over the thought that he had “lost a day.”

There were many reasons, moreover, why the strict letter of the law should have been relaxed in his favour by the priest to whom he had been generous; by his wife, also, of whom he stood

in much greater awe, and whom he deeply suspected of having secretly granted to the juvenile branches of the family that dietetic indulgence which was denied to himself. And had he not a right to it on several accounts? Was he not a soldier—at least, had he not once commanded the National Guard of Milcarrambas when the American filibuster, Walker, made his daring, but unsuccessful, attack on the town? Was he not also a sailor, having several times made the voyage to Acapulco on board his own vessel, the *Pepita*? Above all, was he not an Invalid, or in danger of becoming one; and were not dispensations given by the most severe precisians to persons in such circumstances? And what right had his wife to complain that the daughters of his rival and enemy, Don Juan Cachorro, had appeared at church that day in more gorgeous attire than the three lovely girls who bore the name of Redondo? Also, how should he ever be able to furnish to those daughters proper dowers, since his fellow-citizens had seen fit to deprive him of the rank and emoluments he had long enjoyed as Political Chief of the town and surrounding country, and to elevate the hated Cachorro in his place. The rustling foliage of the garden, and the tapering masts gently moving with the rippling waves of the hill-encircled harbour, had lost for the time all power to charm his eye; care, and wounded self-love, divided his heart; fierce hunger gnawed another and not less important organ.

While he was moodily lighting his twentieth cigarito from the last spark of its predecessor, three persons entered the gate, whom Don Ramon greeted, snappishly, as one who knew that, unlike himself, they had been fortunate enough to dine. His salutation was returned in a friendly, though rather a ceremonious manner, by Don Juan Smith and his two partners, Don Tomaso Jones, and that most insinuating of Frenchmen, M. Lecarottier—generally known in Milcarrambas as Don Alfonso—the heads of the most flourishing mercantile house in the place.

Those distinguished foreigners, after a few preliminary observations, during which they affect an easy air of having nothing particular on their minds, enter at large on the follies and misdeeds of the ruler of the town: a subject greatly interesting to their listener.

“We want you again at the head of affairs. You, as the greatest landholder and most extensive shipowner on the coast, are regarded by every one here as the natural leader of the party of order.”

Don Ramon is flattered, but remains silent. The Gallic tempter takes up the tale, and continues it in rather more fluent Spanish than is at the command of his English associates.

“The people call out for you, *Señor Redondo*; they know well that everything goes to ruin while Cachorro governs. Industry and commerce are at a stand-still, owing to the barbarous manner in which the customs dues are collected. Only think! At present we have a vessel signalled in the offing with a cargo of English goods, which are very much required here. We call upon Don

Juan this morning, and offer to pay him ten per cent of the duties, down, in hard dollars, ten per cent more in six months, and the remainder in state bonds. What did he reply? That he could not wait so long, and that the state securities were only waste paper;—which is very true, but owing to the misgovernment under which the country groans. What is the consequence? It is that we must send the vessel to another port, and that the population must suffer, on account of the unenlightened policy of a tyrant."

"And what we want, and what the inhabitants of Milcarrambas are prepared for," Mr. Smith put in, "is a revolution, which shall place you in power, and enable us to carry on our trade."

The heart of Don Ramon Redondo beat fast, as the path of ambition, from which he had been jostled by an adverse electoral vote, was thus reopened before him. Difficulties presented themselves, however, to his cautious mind; but these were removed one after the other by his kind and judicious bottle-holders. He was told that several officers of the National Guard had been sounded, and that they all worshipped their old commander, and were ready to "pronounce" in his favour; while the poorer classes, and the Indians of the town, sighed for a return of the happy days enjoyed by them under the gentle sway of the noble and generous Redondo. Finally, upon an intimation from Mr. Jones that he and his partners were prepared to defray the "necessary expenses" of the affair, Don Ramon began distinctly to feel that he was the natural ruler of Milcarrambas, the only representative of the "party of order and enlightenment;" and that his fellow-citizens had claims upon him, not to respond to which would be quite a crime. At his suggestion the party adjourned to the quietest chamber in the house, where a transfer of specie immediately took place; also several pieces of paper were produced, and one or two were solemnly burned:—a proceeding which gave the prospective saviour of his country so much pleasure that it is to be presumed they bore his signature.

Messengers were then despatched to summon quietly a few of the heroes of the National Guard and other leaders of public opinion; upon whose arrival, other little pecuniary matters were arranged to the satisfaction of all parties concerned. Before the meeting broke up, a confidential servant brought from Mr. Smith's house a bag containing a quantity of silver in small change, to be used to stimulate the enthusiasm of the populace. And every one of the conspirators felt that the morrow was destined to be a great and memorable day in the annals of Milcarrambas.

Don Ramon retired to snatch a few hours of troubled sleep, full of dreams of glory and power, such as may be supposed to have been present with Napoleon on the evening of the 17th Brumaire; or to have haunted the pillow of Sultan Mahmud before the first cannon had been fired against the Janissaries who stood be-

tween his vaulting ambition and the unlimited sovereignty to which it aspired.

A little before sunrise he was roused by a brown servant, who brought him his chocolate, and informed him that his name was shouted by the people at a tumultuous meeting in the great Plaza of the town, coupled with the wildest vivas and the most emphatic allusions to liberty, the constitution, and other political blessings, which he was expected to bestow in the course of a few hours. The chosen one groaned in spirit, for he was not accustomed to get up quite so early, and the abstinence and excitement of the previous day had broken his sleep until a short time before this untimely disturbance. Moreover, as he drank his fragrant chocolate and nibbled his crisp biscuit, he felt a soothing of animosity against his political rival; perhaps he even wished that his foreign friends had not taken advantage of his moment of weakness and discontent to lead him a dance through scenes of trouble and discomfort, with the possibility of an end horrible to think of.

However, the wine was drawn, and it was necessary to drink it to the dregs; so Don Ramon arose and girt on a ponderous sabre, with regard to the antecedents of which he was in the habit of telling the most wonderful stories to the guests assembled round his hospitable board. Descending to the front door of his house, he found about thirty or forty ragged patriots eagerly awaiting him, by whom he was hailed as their approaching deliverer from the oppressions of Caehorro. A smart young fellow, in a red shirt and green scarf, who was first mate of the Pepita, acted as fagman to the cheering, and, on the appearance of his chief, handed him a paper, on which a short proclamation had been drawn up by the eloquent and politic Lecarottier. This was immediately read aloud by a volunteer secretary of state, and, although not listened to with much attention, excited the popular enthusiasm: which was doubled when Don Ramon, in a short but spirit-stirring speech, ordered his nautical lieutenant to lead the heroic and enlightened citizens to the nearest house where alcoholic fluids were sold. The revolutionary forces accordingly proceeded thither in good order, gaining so many recruits on the way that the stock of pulqué and mescal in the first tavern they occupied was consumed in a marvellously short space of time. A good deal of marching and counter-marching then took place, in order to visit all the shops where arrangements had been made by Don Ramon's agents for the granting of unlimited credit to the friends of order and enlightenment. A dropping fire of old flint muskets and horse-pistols was also kept up, to the injury of no one, as the pieces were generally pointed directly upward, but with the effect of rousing at a small expense that rapturous feeling of combativeness which is said to be experienced by soldiers in the heat of battle. When, towards mid-day, Don Ramon, mounted on a tall grey mule and attended by a score of devoted and influential friends, rode into the

Plaza, the loud viva which rent the air appeared to proclaim that the revolution was accomplished and Milcarrambas saved.

Not yet, however. For, a rumour began to spread among the crowd that the National Guard were under arms, and marching against the assembly of patriots with the intention of dispersing it, and crushing the aspirations of the party of order and enlightenment with fire and sword. Many of the more timid began to slink off, as a force of upwards of a hundred armed men in uniform—red shirts and straw hats—entered the Plaza at a rapid pace, and forming along one side of it in a formidable though rather irregular line, began to fix bayonets in obedience to the hoarse orders of their commanding officer. It was then that Don Ramon Redondo showed that his friends had not been deceived in him, and that he was indeed the man of the crisis. Spurring his mule, he dashed fearlessly forward towards the bristling line, and addressed the stern warriors in one of those short and touching orations for which he was famous, beginning, "Companions in arms!" and concluding with an invitation to the officers to dine with him, and an exhortation to the soldiers to fraternise with the people, and to quench their thirst at his expense. None of the orations recorded by Livy, ever produced such an instantaneous effect; the heroes of the National Guard piled arms as one man, and rushed with enthusiasm to the nearest fountain of pulqué.

All obstacles being now overcome, the victorious vindicators of order—such of them at least as were able to walk steadily—proceeded to the residence of Don Juan Cachorro, in order to secure the person of the oppressor. Some carpers may be of opinion that this step ought to have been taken at an earlier stage of the revolution; but the saviours of their country knew better. The governor of Milcarrambas had the reputation of being a man of bad temper, and was known to possess a pair of Colt's revolvers, which he might have been ill-advised enough to use had any hope of preserving his authority remained to him. Every one, therefore, felt rather relieved when it was ascertained that Don Juan, upon hearing of the defection of the National Guard, had mounted his horse and retired precipitately into the country.

This was the crowning garland of victory. The citizens gave themselves up without restraint to feasting and revelry, and the town resounded until a late hour with the noise of rockets, blank-cartridge, enlightened sentiments, and ecstatic vivas.

Long before evening, the vessel consigned to Messrs. Smith, Jones, and Lecarottier, had quietly dropped anchor in the port, and, without undergoing the odious formality of a custom-house officer's visit, had begun to discharge her valuable cargo, under the personal superintendence of one of the partners of that respectable firm.

A week passed, during which Señor Redondo

repented bitterly of having allowed himself to be seduced from the quiet sphere of private life. He found that the cares of state interfered with his regular hours of refreshment and repose, and threatened to ruin his digestion. The populace and the citizen soldiery were unwilling to return at once to their ordinary avocations after the exciting interlude of political strife they had enjoyed, and were deeply discontented to find that the drinking-shops were no longer open on credit.

Perhaps Don Ramon was not very sorry when he learned that his enemy was about to re-enter the town, at the head of an overwhelming force of two hundred men, recruited in the neighbouring districts. The friends at whose instigation the revolution had been accomplished offered no encouragement to active resistance, and he fled beyond seas on board the Pepita, the night before his rival's triumphant restoration to power. His pardon was granted a month afterwards, upon security being given for peaceful behaviour, and the payment of a moderate fine. Don Juan Cachorro also attempted to enforce the customs dues from Messrs. Smith, Jones, and Lecarottier; but those gentlemen indignantly declared that if any such outrage were committed, they would apply for protection to the commanders of the Bulldog and the Renommée sloops-of-war, belonging to the Pacific squadrons of their respective countries. As it was well known that the officers in question would not hesitate to bombard the town, it was judged prudent to stop proceedings against the peaceful merchants. So, Milcarrambas soon settled down into its usual state of contented inactivity and dreamy repose, and Don Ramon gave dinner-parties as before.

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